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The Beaver

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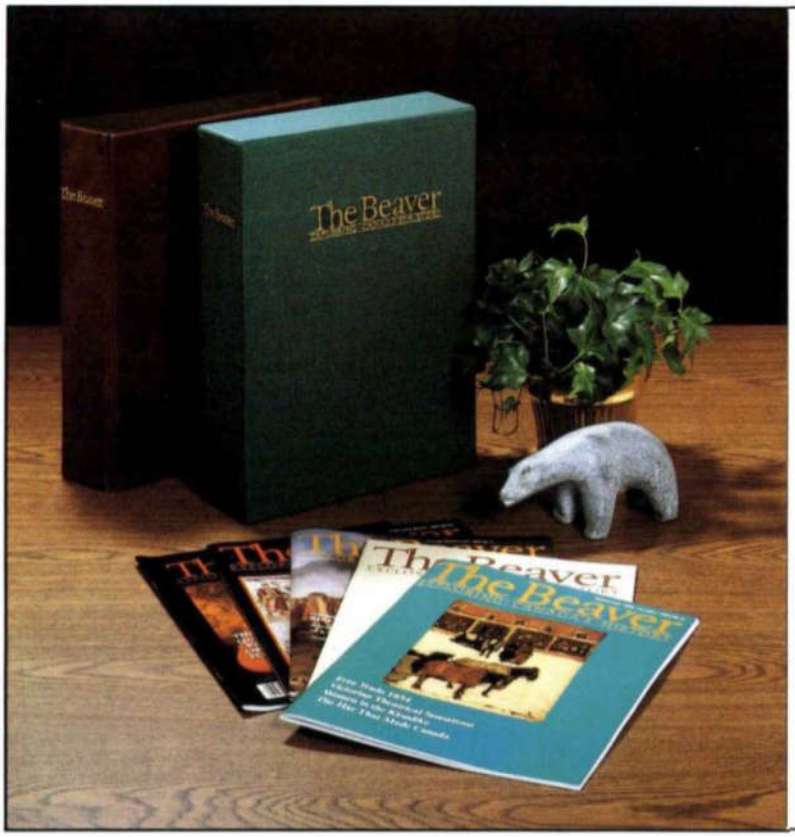
A Gunner at Ypres

Through Arctic Seas

A Spy in Canada



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Christopher Dafoe

Annals of *The Beaver*

"I have met a surprising number of people who think *The Beaver* is a staff magazine and available to staff only," wrote editor Helen Burgess in 1973. Mrs. Burgess was not the first — or the last — editor of the magazine to make this wistful complaint.

Looking back over 75 years of "*Beaver*" archives, it is difficult to escape the notion that editors have spent an inordinate amount of time over the decades attempting to define the *exact* nature of the magazine.

Was it a "company" magazine? Well, it was and it wasn't. Between 1920 and 1994 it was published by an old established trading company and the magazine certainly presented a good deal of Company history over the years, but it also published articles on other topics and as early as the 1940s an editor, Clifford Wilson, was insisting that references to the Hudson's Bay Company were not mandatory. (Nevertheless, the current editor still gets queries from would-be authors who are eager to point out that their proposed article contains "an HBC angle").

Douglas MacKay, when he became editor in 1933, attempted to define exactly what the magazine would be:

> It was to tell the story of the North country in all its activities, and to definitely express the vital association of the Company [the Hudson's Bay Company] with that country.

The new version of *The Beaver* would be called *North* and it would circulate among people interested in the fur trade and friends of the Hudson's Bay Company. The change of name never took place and the target audience expanded with the years, going far beyond those with a narrow interest in the fur trade and closely related business matters. Almost without realizing it *The Beaver* had opened a window to the North and Canadians and others around the world found themselves fascinated by the unfolding story of this new frontier.

By 1971 the magazine had evolved and the circulation had grown, but the basic concepts remained remarkably similar to the MacKay vision. In that year, Malvina Bolus, who had been editor since 1958, paused to contemplate the mission of *The Beaver.* It was, she wrote, "a magazine to present to the general, intelligent reader aspects of the North, its history and its people, with which the name of the Hudson's Bay Company has long been associated."

Pointing out again that the magazine was "no longer a house organ", Miss Bolus stressed that "its coverage is unique for it is not directed to any single discipline but ranges the fields of exploration, history, development, art, nature, people. Archaeologists, ethnologists, biologists contribute to its pages, interpreting their sciences in terms intelligible to the lay reader. Because of the quality of the contributions, the careful checking for authenticity, the selection of good illustrations, *The Beaver* is an accepted reference work for universities and schools and at the same time is enjoyed by the ordinary reader who does not specialize."

The veteran editor then pinned her colours to the mast:

> The objective of the editor is to produce, featuring the North, a magazine of the highest standard, complete integrity, good taste, and appeal to the greatest possible number of educated people. This reflects the interests of the HBC, which is not a publishing house, in making a contribution to the culture of Canada ... There is no propaganda.

A similar theme was taken up in a more emphatic way at an earlier stage of the magazine's development in a pugnacious editorial called "Northern Fact and Fiction" in which the unidentified writer heaps scorn upon those who write without "accuracy" on Northern matters. *The Beaver,* transgressors are warned, has assumed the role of guardian, standing in godlike defence of truth and accuracy.

This desire for perfection is a recurring theme in *Beaver* records over the years and a word-count might well indicate that the words "truth" and "accuracy" have appeared in the correspondence so often that a cynical observer might suggest that *The Beaver* was possibly protesting a bit too much. After all, it might be assumed that editors would naturally strive for accuracy and long for truth. It should go without saying, as the saying goes.

Nevertheless, editors of *The Beaver* and their friends have filled page after page with often self-serving propaganda about how "accurate" and "fact-filled" the magazine is, issue after issue. One item on the files claims that the magazine prides itself on publishing only "the absolute facts" and asserts that during the tenure of one editor "only two errors were made". Those who know something about how elusive absolute truth can be and how difficult it is to be perfectly accurate about anything in this highly imperfect and curiously inaccurate world may smile and forgive.

The success of *The Beaver* was such a surprise to those involved in its publication that there is little wonder that a note of hyperbole crept in. After all, the magazine was not all that promising at first. The early "house

Malvina Bolus, Editor of "The Beaver", 1958-1972.

Helen Burgess, Editor of "The Beaver", 1972-1985.

organ" editions are generally unreadable to modern eyes except as period curiosities and as far as "accuracy" and "absolute facts" go, the magazine got off to a wobbly start.

The great change came in 1933 when Douglas MacKay took over, but even he was unaware of the potential of the magazine he was planning. It would be a company magazine with a difference because the Hudson's Bay Company was a different sort of company, being old and famous in history. Even so, it was felt that the improved *Beaver* would have limited appeal and that the audience would consist chiefly of HBC people and a few outside friends of the fur trade. As it turned out, the magazine ran away from them, attracting readers from the general public and turning *The Beaver* from a "private" into a "public" magazine. *The Beaver* filled a need and it survived because it changed gradually over the years in order to cater to the changing requirements of its audience.

It also reflected the changing realities of the magazine business. In a letter to a fellow editor written in 1960, Malvina Bolus discussed the current needs of the magazine:

> What we do want is a little hard to define. Our field is "the North", primarily the North and West, but "North" can justifiably, I feel, include most of Canada. *The Beaver* used to publish exclusively historical articles; now current topics are also acceptable and I prefer to leaven the history with what will be history tomorrow.

Under two editors — Malvina Bolus and Helen Burgess — *The Beaver* became essentially a general interest magazine with an emphasis on the North and West. You could read about Inuit art, wildflowers, native customs, travel, settlement, science and geography and for many years these topics proved to be what the magazine needed to attract an appreciative audience.

By the mid-1980s, however, it was evident that a change of direction was needed. Magazines with a specific focus seemed to be most successful and it was decided to concentrate on Canadian history, reviving and expanding a long-standing aspect of the magazine. Some readers missed the broad variety of topics while others felt that the shift away from emphasis on the fur trade was a mistake.

Circulation increased dramatically and it became clear that large numbers of Canadians have a keen interest in the history of their own country. *The Beaver,* formerly a "Magazine of the North", began to seek out the elusive truths of all of Canada's history, striving for "accuracy", but aware that "the facts" of history are subject to interpretation and revision. "Truth is the daughter of Time." ◆

The Senate Paintings

A Forgotten Memorial of the Great War

By Hugh A. Halliday

"On Leave" by Clare Atwood.

"A Mobile Veterinary Unit in France" by Algernon Talmage.

"Landing of the First Canadian Division at St. Nazaire" by Edgar Bundy.

Tourists visiting Ottawa flock to Parliament Hill, and many hope to view the House of Commons when it is in session — preferably during a fiery Question Period. The Senate is passed over quickly, given its lesser prominence in Canadian political consciousness. Nevertheless, if the Red Chamber is not a powerhouse comparable to the Commons, it is interesting for the enormous paintings that dominate its walls, canvasses about which Parliamentary staff are only vaguely informed and are sometimes contemptuous. These large oils, yellowing with age, are linked to one of the most remarkable art programs ever undertaken, the Canadian War Memorials Fund.

The moving force behind this was Sir Max Aitken (later Lord Beaverbrook), the expatriate Canadian who had become a British press baron before the First World War. During that conflict, with ties to both the British and Canadian governments, Aitken was responsible for Canadian military records, including unit diaries, photography and cine-photography. One of his goals was to tell Canadians and the world just what Canadian soldiers were accomplishing in France.

In 1916 he struck upon the idea of hiring painter Richard Jack to reconstruct on canvas the Second Battle of Ypres, an earlier event that had gone unrecorded by cameras. The project grew into a general art programme involving many painters and funded by various sources including Sir Max, some of his friends, sales of books, and fees paid at exhibitions of Canadian war photographs.

Sir Max knew little about art, but he had the wit to enlist the services of experts. They in turn recruited dozens of artists — some obscure, some famous, and some destined for fame — who worked in France, Belgium, England and Canada. Ultimately the War Memorials Fund collection comprised some 850 drawings, watercolours, and oils on canvas which were presented to Canada in 1919 and 1920. Aitken/Beaverbrook received no formal thanks from the government until 1928.

Lord Beaverbrook and his associates had hoped that the paintings would ultimately be housed in a special structure in Ottawa which would serve as both an art gallery and a war memorial. Preliminary designs for such a building were drawn up in 1918 but nothing further was done. The National Gallery of Canada, which became the custodian of the war paintings, had little opportunity to display them, although it used the existence of the War Memorials collection as an argument for securing a building of its own.

Ironically, when the NGC finally occupied its present modern *palais d'art* in 1988, it was on the site tentatively chosen 70 years earlier for the unbuilt war memorial gallery. An even greater irony is that by that time the bulk of the War Memorials paintings, together with some 4,500 works done under official auspices during the Second World War, were no longer held by the National Gallery of Canada; they had been transferred to the Canadian War Museum in 1972.

Sir Max Aitken: A pictorial record.

As central pieces in the proposed war memorial gallery, Beaverbrook and his advisors authorized the painting of 33 huge oils on canvas. When these were completed, they proved to be an embarrassment, for their sheer size complicated storage and rendered exhibition almost impossible.

At this point (1922) Parliament itself offered an opportunity to exhibit some of the oversized works. The Centre Block had burned in 1916; construction of a replacement building continued until 1926, including the Peace Tower which was itself a war memorial. In casting about for paintings to decorate the new Centre Block, authorities selected eight of the large oils for hanging in the Senate. Apart from occasional dismountings for cleaning, they have been on continual display ever since. Nevertheless, in a curious way, these paintings are almost invisible, given the haste with which tours pass through the Red Chamber and the uninformed staff who handle rare questions about the canvasses.

The eight oils are truly large; Edgar Bundy's *Landing of the First Canadian Division at Saint-Nazaire, 1915* is 8½ x 15 feet; *Canadian Railway Construction* by Leonard Richmond (not illustrated) is about 10 x 14 feet, and the others are not much smaller.

Curiously, although the Canadian War Memorials Fund employed as many Canadian painters as British, commissions for the giant, near-mural size oils went only to British artists. One near-exception, by virtue of some time spent in Canada, is James Kerr-Lawson. Two of the Senate paintings — *Arras, the Dead City* and *The Cloth Hall, Ypres* — are by him; the latter is the most widely-reproduced of these works, having appeared in numerous

histories of the war.

Although the painters were British, the works in the Senate have their Canadian touches or points of international significance. *Canadian Railway Construction* represents a First World War activity at which Canadians were singularly talented. *Landing of the First Canadian Division* is filled with identifiable, historically significant Canadians including Colonel (later Lieutenant-General) Sir Richard Turner, VC. Clare Atwood's *On Leave*, showing a YMCA canteen in a London railway station, features a sergeant and a private of the 13th Battalion, Canadian Expeditionary Force ("The Black Watch"). Kerr-Lawson's two oils deal with wartime destruction; Sir George Clausen's *Returning to the Reconquered Land* (peasants coming home to devastated villages) is both grim and optimistic. Only one work — Algernon Talmage's *A Mobile Veterinary Unit in France* (often incorrectly identified as *The Road to Henin*) with its beautifully executed horses, can be described as a "pretty" picture. However, the subject is a bit more grim on closer examination. Talmage had been attached to the Canadian Veterinary Corps and his work shows the movement of wounded horses to the rear.

For a 1919 exhibition the artists provided extensive notes, some explaining the symbolism present in their works. *Arras, the Dead City* is particularly poignant, for the ruins shown had been chosen carefully. They were those of the Cathedral of St.Vaast, who had devoted his life to rebuilding sacred places destroyed by barbarian invasions eight centuries earlier. Sir William Rothenstein (*The Watch on the Rhine*) stated that his work recorded the last task of the Imperial army — the occupation of enemy territory. A single British howitzer and sentry guard the border, while in the background is Germany itself.

The eight Senate paintings are historic pieces, but they have never attracted much public notice. They are unlikely to receive any added attention in the future. Hung in an area of secondary interest to tourists and political leaders, their status reflects the fading public consciousness of the national accomplishments and sacrifices of the First World War. ◆

Hugh A. Halliday retires this autumn from the staff of the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa.

"Returning to the Reconquered Land" by Sir George Clausen.

"Arras, the Dead City" by James Kerr-Lawson.

"The Watch on the Rhine" by Sir William Rothenstein.

HARRY CRERAR AT SECOND YPRES

The New Face of War

By Paul Dickson

"I really don't believe," Canadian artillery captain Harry Crerar recorded in his diary on 29 April 1915, "any of us expected to have endured a week of battle such as this one has been. A good many thousands of us haven't but have been killed in the fighting of it. The Canadians have made a name — a real name — and have done one of the big things of the war."

Crerar's entry captured the shock, horror and pride felt by many of the survivors of the Second Battle of Ypres, fought in April-May 1915. Ypres introduced the Canadians to the realities of modern warfare, with its immense capacity for death and destruction. Half the Canadian Division's infantry, 6,036 men, were casualties. Each of the three artillery brigades' losses of guns and horses were similar in proportion; their men were spared the full enormity of the casualty lists.

Second Ypres provided the Second World War's First Canadian Army Commander, General Henry Duncan Graham "Harry" Crerar, a brutal baptism of fire. A militia captain when he went overseas in 1914 with the Hamilton, Ontario, battery, Crerar had risen to the rank of acting lieutenant-colonel and the prestigious position of the Canadian Corps' Counter-Battery Staff Officer by November 1918. Awarded a Distinguished Service Order, as well as a Mention in Dispatches in 1917, he was held in high esteem within the highly regarded Canadian Corps Royal Artillery, a branch of the formation that won no small number of accolades itself.

Crerar's wartime experiences were an important factor in his decision to join the Permanent Force in 1920; they also shattered forever his romantic notions of warfare, imbuing instead his view of the military and war with a conviction that Canada could not afford to commit herself unprepared in any future conflict. Professionally, he profited from practical experience in the step-by-step methods which predominated in the artillery and characterized the Canadian Corps' approach, by 1917, to the trench warfare of the Western Front. The determined, methodical and cautious tactics employed by the Canadian artillery by 1918 mirrored the future general's characteristic approach to life and work.

The personal cost of the war was heavy; its impact far-reaching. Crerar lost his younger brother Malcolm, one of the brightest lights in the family; brother Alastair was severely wounded in 1918. Among his militia compatriots, Crerar was, by 1916, one of the few surviving originals from the Hamilton Artillery Battery. He was characteristically silent on the full effects of these deaths, preferring to relate only the light "choice bits" of his experience to those who asked. Following the Armistice, the war was rarely discussed, even among immediate family.

Crerar's wartime journal, which he kept consistently until November 1915, captured the changes that he, and many others, underwent during the early fighting. It records the blur of events from Crerar's departure from Toronto through his first months in command of the battery. The entries convey a range of emotions and circumstances — the tedium of daily routine; the nervous excitement of battle; and the hazards of facing daily shellfire. Crerar observed some years later that "it was written for 'family' perusal" and mindful of the censor's wary

The happy warriors of 1915 face the grim realities of battle

The young Harry Crerar in dress uniform.

eye. Like many soldiers who fought in the war, he was at pains to "conceal the reality of what was happening" from the loved ones at home. Few soldiers revealed the horrors they encountered; it has also been asserted that the problem was also one of the near impossibility of finding words to portray the "indescribable". Crerar was nevertheless adept at recording his observations and, while not graphically descriptive, he was more than willing to paint a realistic picture — and as the battery's censor he was able to give more information than most.

The entries are a guide to the transformation of an enthusiastic, almost cocky, civilian-soldier, proud of his Hamilton roots, into a cool and confident officer, appalled by the slaughter but resigned to its necessity. The journal's emotional rawness reveals the effects of having been written as events occurred; its dry humour reflects Crerar's understated personality. The entries take on a weary tone, reflecting a longing for home as the fighting continued with little result.

The Canadian response to Britain's declaration of war on 4 August 1914 was a quick and enthusiastic offer of an expeditionary force, gratefully accepted by His Majesty's government on 6 August. The cabinet authorized the raising and equipping of a contingent whose strength was set at 25,000 volunteers by an order-in-council on 10 August. The army's detailed mobilization plan was scrapped, however, by the Minister of Militia, Sam Hughes. Instead, an all-volunteer Expeditionary Force would concentrate and organize at the minister's monument to political pork-barreling — Valcartier Camp in Quebec.

Crerar's Hamilton battery was one of the nine batteries selected to form the three-Brigade Artillery component of the Expeditionary Force, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Harry Burstall, a gunner of long standing in the pre-war army. Crerar had joined the militia following his graduation from the Royal Military College of Canada in 1909; despite a declared preference for the more exotic climes offered by enlistment with the British cavalry, influenced by his love of horses and travel, Crerar balked at the cost and the continued dependence on his family's wealth that such a choice would entail. The mobilization order thus found the young officer in Toronto, near the offices of his employer, Ontario Hydro.

Captain Crerar, as second-in-command, worked with the battery commander, Major H.G. Carscallen, and the three subalterns to hurriedly mobilize the battery's men, horses and equipment. The artillery units began their move to Valcartier at the end of August. Although entraining the battery's men, horses, guns, limbers and ammunition proved more difficult than expected, the infectious atmosphere of excitement was Crerar's most prominent memory. "I never saw such a crowd," Crerar noted, "and the few minutes we were there will long stay in my memory."

At Valcartier, as one gunner observed, "life was busy." The Artillery, however, mobilized "with far less confusion than the infantry" Crerar observed.

The war was still far away; the approach to training, as well as the particulars, reflected the distance: "This afternoon I took out a 'ride' of sixty men — and shouted myself hoarse at them — in an endeavour to instill some principles of riding into their heads, hands and seats. There were some funny ones — really it was very hard to keep a straight face and call them down." Other duties were more mundane; the paperwork was endless. The dietary changes of army life took their toll on the battery's section leaders, as did the cold, wet fall weather; Crerar's personal fortitude earned him the title "iron man".

Crerar's pride in his Hamilton roots was evident. He was inspired by the results of the battery's efforts on inspection, impressed with the effort required to prepare, mount and parade the battery. The pomp and circumstance of the reviews soon outweighed their usefulness, however, and the constant rain delayed drill and depressed morale. After two tiring and wet weeks in camp, he noted with exasperation "another review — for Sam Hughes' benefit and for the moving picture operations. A damn nuisance and a waste of time."

The Expeditionary Force decamped on 25 September. Anticipation ran high as the battery packed and prepared to leave. The departure began as darkness fell on the 25th. It was a memorable scene for Crerar:

It was raining and cold which did not improve conditions. We paraded at 5 P.M. The RCGA band was on the job — and filled in the couple of hours of waiting before our departure by discoursing various popular airs, — *It's a Long Way to Tipperary* and *Auld Lang Syne* being the most popular. It was quite a sight in the gathering dusk — the big bonfires of rubbish on the camp lines giving just sufficient illumination to see by. The rain pelting down and the broken clouds scooting by. At eight-thirty we pulled out. It was very dark and impossible to see more than thirty feet or so ahead. The road, at any time — terrible — was, on account of the rain, a regular mud hole and from the start we had our hands full to keep the battery intact.

Astride a nervous mare which kept him from snatching any sleep, Crerar took up the rear of the brigade column, ensuring that the slower transport and ammunition wagons kept up the pace. He recorded the size of the battery as 6 guns, 18 ammunition wagons, 4 transport wagons, 1 water cart, 6 officers, 187 men and 183 horses. Through a cold and rainy night, with the aid of "some hard work and strong language", the battery column slowly wound its way along the muddy road towards the rendezvous camp at the Quebec City Exhibition Grounds, arriving at four in the morning to await the order to board ship.

The battery boarded their transport, the *Gambion*, without event, one of the few to do so. There followed several days of waiting as the Expeditionary Force was loaded onto the remaining 29 transports.

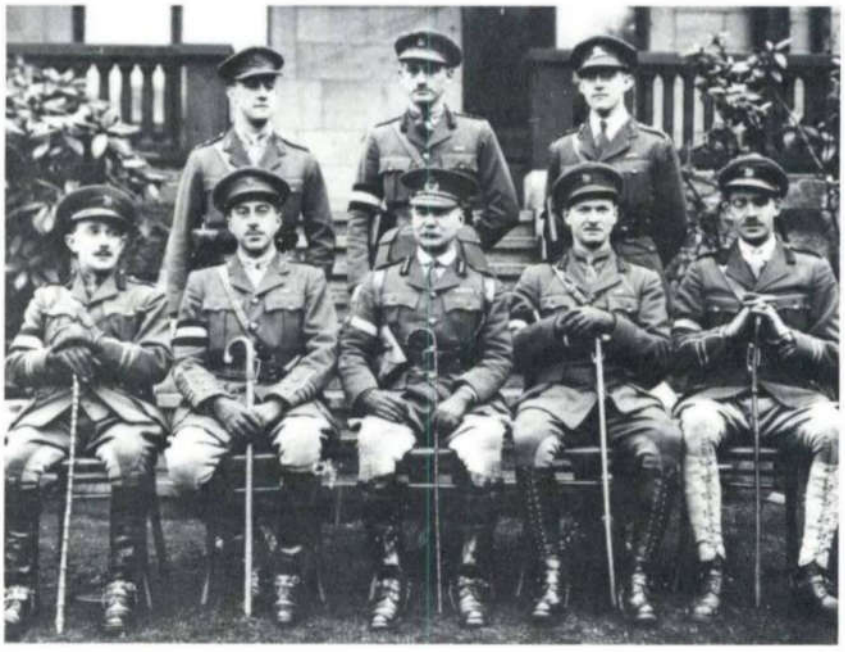
"Voyage without special incident" reads the historical section's report of the crossing. Crerar occupied himself with thinking up physical and drill activities to keep the men and himself busy, attending to the horses, and brushing up on his French. He also reflected on the imminent fighting, his entries a mix of concern and bravado:

> Vaccination is the order of the day — if they'd only produce some anti-toxin for bullets now, we'd be absolutely safe. Revolver practice was held in the P.M. for officers. I made top score with seven hits out of seven shots — by *Himmel*, the Germans better look out when I come along.

Impatiently, he awaited the completion of the voyage, moving at the speed of the slowest transport: "largely a waste of time and particularly hard on the horses".

The lead transports entered Plymouth Sound on 14 October 1914. The congestion of the port kept the battery on the *Gambion* for 6 more anxious days. Orderly Officer Crerar had the unenviable task of escorting 200 men and officers on their first, and only, shore leave where all, "with the aid of a thirst acquired from weeks of abstinence, hit the can pretty severely." Relief came as the battery's men and horses were finally unloaded on the 19th.

Seven hours on the train and a twelve-mile ride brought Harry and the battery to Salisbury Plain. Anticipation ran high. "It's a pretty country," he observed, "rolling plains with patches of woods and I'm mighty anxious to get our guns and work on it." That would change quickly. Rain, mud and cold was probably the



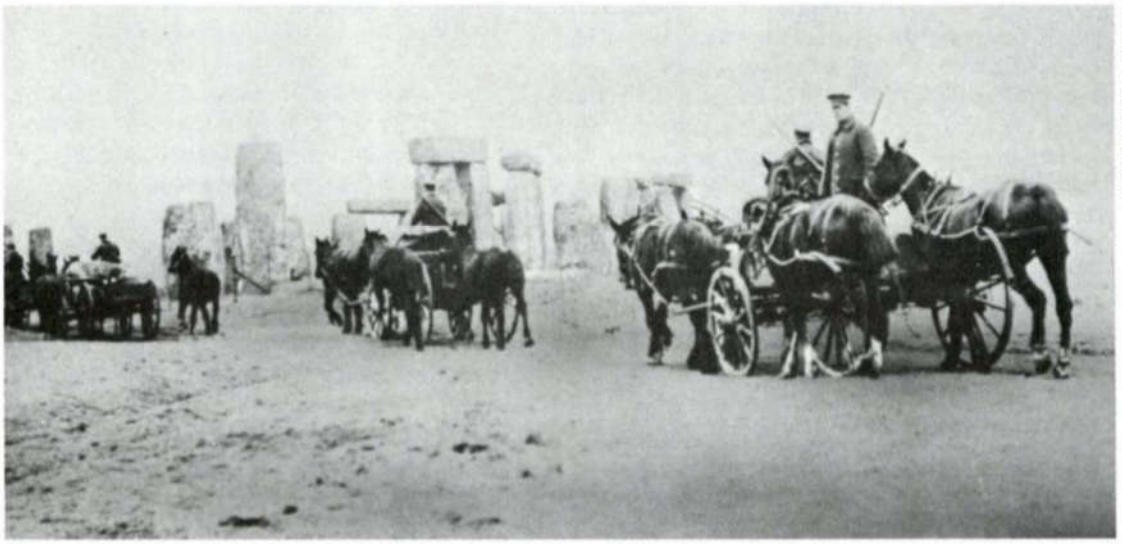
Hoping for a good war: Crerar (front row, second from left) with fellow officers.

most prevalent memory of the Canadians' extended 10-week stay on Salisbury Plain. It hindered all the work at hand. Daily training became impossible as the mud disabled horses, men and equipment; living in tents, life was miserable. Weather became a preoccupation. "If a day comes along that is really fine," he noted in December, "I'll sit down and write an essay on it — until I do, understand all days to be wet, this to be understood in the superlative." He explained himself a few lines later: "It really is too bad about the weather — you see I can't get off the subject but it does hinder our work so." Morale was further weakened, in his opinion, by the constant inspections, ceremonial reviews and enforced temperance; the situation was exacerbated, he believed, by the high proportion of British immigrants in the Division. Crerar nevertheless admired their "grit", observing with pride "that in spite of wet clothes and wet feet the men are wonderfully cheery, their only worry being the delay before getting to the firingline".

Numerous obstacles limited efforts to train the battery. In addition to the weather, scarce space and ammunition also hindered practice firing with live ammunition. (The Canadian batteries were, in fact, unable to fire until the fourth week of January 1915.) The training was disrupted further by the reorganization of the battery ordered on 17 November by the British War Office, after conditions in the early stages of the war convinced them that the manoeuvre of six guns was too great a responsibility for a major. Establishments were subsequently reduced to four guns per battery and four batteries per brigade. While route marches and manoeuvres emphasized equitation and driving, enhancing the ability to bring the guns smartly into action, the static warfare and terrible conditions on the Western Front would negate the utility of much of this training. More important was the constant rehearsal of gun-laying, loading and firing, practised until it became second nature.

All were eager to see the Front. Christmas leave came and went. Crerar returned to find the battery packing under orders to move to new accommodations in private homes north of the camp. This welcome change in early January was met with "relief and general thanksgiving". The enthusiasm engendered by the relative comfort of their new surroundings was heightened by rumours of the Division's impending departure. Crerar noted that shortfalls in equipment were being made up and that maps of the Ypres area had been issued.

The long-awaited orders arrived on 26 January 1915. The Division was to be moved to the West Country port of Avonmouth by unit from 7 February. Four cramped and rough days at sea brought the Canadians to the French port of St. Nazaire. There was no relief at the end of the voyage. A stevedores' strike forced the seasick men to unload their own equipment and luggage. After a brief rest, a 48-hour train journey landed the weary battery near Hazebrouck, where it marched in a driving rain to its billets, some 15 miles behind the front. Peeling off his week-old clothes, Crerar bathed and went to sleep to the flashes of searchlights and star shells and the sounds of the big guns in the distance.



National Archives of Canada

A crossroads of history: Canadian transport passing Stonehenge, winter 1914.

The Canadian Division found itself in reserve to the 3rd Corps, British Second Army. A deadlock had descended on the Western Front following the climactic battles of September and October 1914. A series of entrenched lines now stretched over 500 miles from the coast of Belgium to the Swiss border. The northern section of the line was held by one Belgian army, the French Eighth Army and

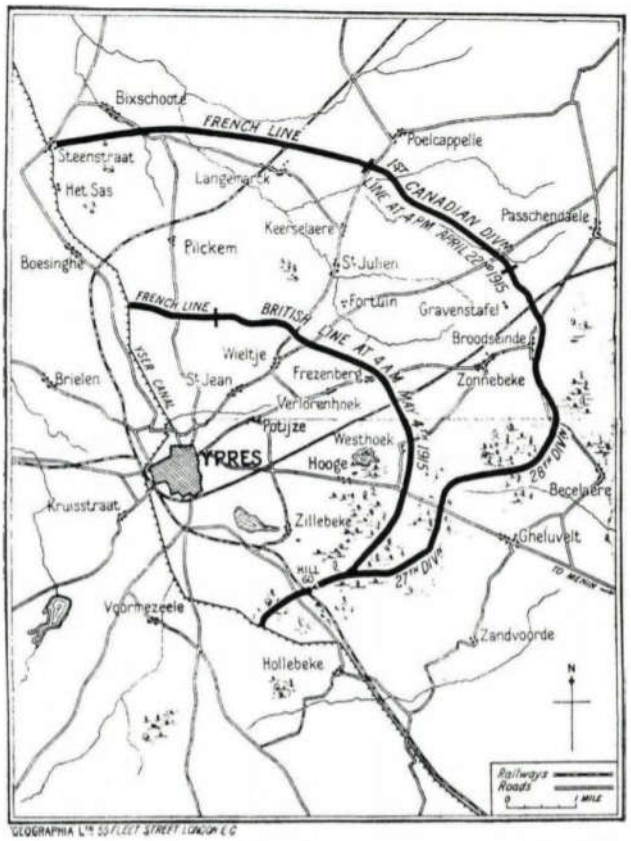
two British armies. The Second Army, commanded by General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, was flanked on the left by the French Eighth and on the right by the British First Army, commanded by General Douglas Haig. The Second's position extended some 17 miles from the Ypres-Comines railway across the valleys of the Lys and the Douve to Bois Grenier, three miles south of Armentières. The Canadian Division was placed in reserve of the Third Corps section of the Ypres / Armentières line.

The artillery component of the Division, like the infantry, was given a brief period of indoctrination into trench warfare through attachment to a British Division. From 17 February, the artillery brigades spent the next ten days gaining practical experience in the conditions of the front lines. Only a small number, however, were permitted to go to the Front. Brigade commanders, battery commanders and subalterns received the first chance. In effect, this meant that the majority of the gunners would begin their first tour of duty in the lines without prior experience.

Crerar was not among those to make the initial trip to the lines. Much to his regret, captains remained behind, charged with the responsibility for the batteries' men and equipment. Time bore heavily on his hands; it was not yet a luxury. Living conditions were relatively comfortable. His needs were looked after by his "man" Dodd and he supplemented the bland "Bully beef, hard tack and desiccated vegetables" with purchases of biscuits and chocolate as well as eggs from the local farmers. The terrain left him cold, however: "gooey [and] sticky ... after I've been walking ten minutes, I have at least five pounds of [Flemish mud] on either foot." He found the local inhabitants a "peculiar mixture", their friendliness and gratitude in direct relation to their proximity to the Front. The surreal atmosphere of his first days on the Continent was magnified by the continued survival of some semblance of the local pre-war society. "It's a funny warfare," he observed. "One feels quite annoyed if the Germans start shelling during mealtimes and as a matter of fact, they rarely do — and five o'clock tea is vigorously observed by the English and German alike." Eager to be in the thick of it, Crerar had to content himself with snatches of what lay in store from those who had experienced the line and rumours of impending moves. He belittled the danger if one was careful and lucky, amusing himself with the job of censor.

The Canadians were moved to the Front in short order. By 3 March the Division was assigned some three miles of front and the field artillery moved forward with its affiliated infantry brigade. The Third Brigade was attached to the Third Infantry Brigade – "a fairly useful collection" was Crerar's characterization. The batteries were sent into action 2,500 yards from the Front while one was kept in reserve. Crerar observed the signs of the impending move as the roads became crowded with military transport "all headed the one way and comprising our Divisional Supply and Ammunition Columns."

On 2 March 1915, the battery was en route to the firing line. Supervising the positioning of the wagons, Crerar spent the next few days moving ammunition up to the battery. His excitement and fascination were clear as the German shellfire burst close by and fellow officers of the battery recounted the hazards of duty near the Front. Admiring their courage and good humour facing danger, he longed to be tested and not found wanting.



The Ypres salient, 1915. From "Canada in Flanders" by Sir Max Aitken, 1916.

Crerar was soon provided an opportunity to prove himself. The British High Command planned to send Haig's First Army, on the Canadian right, to capture the village of Neuve Chapelle and the Aubers Ridge three miles beyond. This position dominated the British positions and the Germans used every opportunity to make life unpleasant for the British troops. The attack was scheduled for 10 March and the Canadian Division was assigned the task of creating a diversion to stop the German troops in its sector from reinforcing the battle area. The divisional artillery was instructed to engage obvious targets but ammunition was to be carefully husbanded — a maximum of 180 rounds for the three batteries engaged.

Crerar spent the three days prior to the Battle of Neuve Chapelle in the infantry trenches obtaining a feel for the area his battery was to cover — "a useful experience ... one I won't forget in a hurry." He and his

C.O. supervised the shoot in support of the British attack as they engaged targets described by an infantry observation officer. The battery enjoyed some success, under only a desultory fire from the Germans. Crerar's battery and the two other batteries of the Third Brigade together fired off 445 shells, 265 more than their allotment.

It was, for Crerar, "excellent practice" and an innocuous introduction to battle. The firing had little effect beyond that. After five days, and some missed opportunities, the British attack stalled in the face of the stiffening German opposition and was called off. At a cost of 12,892 casualties, the gains were small enough and the lessons learned would be relearned at even greater cost. Crerar was nevertheless impressed with the devastation wrought by the artillery fire — "every building was knocked flat as if it had been a house of cards" and by the pinpoint accuracy achieved by the battery guided by precision directions, the result of the innovations in the system of shooting by map.

The Canadian Division's infantry remained in the Fleurbaix sector of the Front for two "relatively quiet" weeks until it went into reserve on 27 March. The artillery was given no such respite. The battery spent the several days after Neuve Chapelle on what seemed like "a tour of North-eastern France in twenty-four hours", the highlight of which was an attachment to the British Eighth Division. "Quite a compliment," Crerar observed, "but still I prefer to fight with our own chaps," a comment that reflected Crerar's ambiguous approach to the British. At the end of the month, he recorded his feelings about the British officers:

> They are a funny lot, the English officers — I either find them tremendously to my liking, quiet keen chaps with abundance of humour and fellow feeling or else they are quite the limit, overbearing unintelligent snobs. There seems to be no half way house with them.

The Canadians' attachment to the Imperials was brief and within a day, an exhausted Captain Crerar led an equally tired battery back to its original positions.

Crerar adapted to the circumstances of the Front, assuming what one author has called the "style of utter *sang-froid*" — affecting an unflappable persona in the face of the dangers around him; the casualties mounted but it was still impersonal:

> We lost many [at Neuve Chapelle] though in comparison, the number was not extravagant to the advantages gained and bigger losses inflicted — still, over five hundred officer casualties tells a pretty bitter tale. And there is no love lost between that Division and the Germans. The N.C.O., telling the major of the German counter-attack after the trenches had been stormed, said: "We waited for 'em — smiling — covered up to our necks, and when they came in close, we gave it to 'em and piled the bastards up five deep". Not pretty or funny but just war.

The Divisional artillery was moved northward to a new training area in the first week of April, near the ancient Belgian town of Ypres. The old town of Ypres and the surrounding area was one of the last pieces of Belgian territory still in Allied hands. The line surrounding the town formed a deep salient some 17 miles long that bulged into German-held territory. Surrounded on three sides by German lines, the salient was as tactically untenable as it was politically important, and the Allied High Command insisted it be held. The French Eighth Army had been responsible for the defence of the area but at the insistence of the French Commander-in-Chief, General Joffre, the British Second Army extended its section of the line north to include the Ypres salient. The move began on 1 April 1915. It was the beginning of a long and costly relationship.

The infantry of the Canadian Division began its move to the salient on 14 April. Four days later, batteries of the Second and Third Brigades, Canadian Field Artillery, replaced the French artillery. The brigades moved forward, surrounded by the departing French troops — "sloppy little devils, the men, hairy faces and seemingly fairly old" — and billeted near the front at Poperinghe to await the order to take over the new section.

The vulnerability of the new position was evident. The German Fourth Army, whose objective was to eliminate the bulge in their lines to draw attention away from an offensive in the East, planned an assault to take the Yser Canal south to and including the town of Ypres, simultaneously testing the effectiveness of chlorine gas. Four divisions were allotted the task of wiping out the salient. As a prelude to the operation, a German 42-centimetre howitzer dropped a 2,000-pound shell on Ypres, signaling the beginning of a general bombardment.

Crerar's battery moved forward in the thick of the German barrage on the 20th. Crerar led half the battery's guns in column under shell fire through Ypres, successfully getting "the guns in and teams out without any trouble" and retiring to the wagon lines and Brigade Ammunition column. While the men at the Front frantically constructed new positions south of Gravenstafel Ridge, Crerar worked to ensure the safety of the men and horses as shells rained down on the wagon lines "fully a mile and three quarters from our own battery" but, because of the horseshoe shape of the line, "quite as near the firing line as the battery itself". His responsibilities took him back and forth between the wagon lines and the battery's front-line position — a gruelling mile and a quarter through the mud and under fire, mainly on foot: "one can't ride up to within a mile of the battery by day."

The German bombardment caused a growing number of casualties. Death was still unfamiliar and it shook him:

> I was in Wipers [Ypres] this morning [the 20th] and before leaving tried to see Trum Warren and Bob Cory. I couldn't find them and this afternoon I heard that

Trum was killed during the shelling. Poor old chap — he was one of the best. It has made us all feel very blue. It will take a lot to make me forgive those swine for killing Trum Warren. They've surely got a lot to answer for.

The 21st brought no respite:

It was our turn today and Billy Young was plugged in the thigh by a rifle bullet. They got all around the guns with their shells yesterday — one landed just five feet away from No.1 and quite a few were dropping in the afternoon while I was up there. We are moving back into reserve tonight. In a way, I'm sore about it, because we had registered their trenches so beautifully.

There was no relief that day, however; none in fact until 6 May, some two weeks later. The details of the Second Battle of Ypres and the Canadians' role are well known. It was a test of endurance and courage. Mistakes were made but in the end the Canadians held. It was not until the crisis of the battle had passed that Crerar was fully aware of the important contribution that the Canadians and his battery had made. For over a week the battery was in almost continuous action; he had little time for reflection. It was, however, an important turning point for Crerar. "I really don't believe," he wrote six days into it, "any of us expected to have endured a week of battle such as this one has been."

The 22nd of April, a clear, sunny day, found Crerar looking for alternative cross-country routes for the journey from the battery to its wagons and limbers, especially important in light of their impending relief of the 11th by sections of the Second Brigade's Eighth Battery. "The enemy shelling of targets in the salient," he remembered, "had noticeably increased during the previous couple of days and St. Julien, through which my ammunition wagons and supplies normally passed enroute to the gun position, was becoming a place to avoid, if at all possible."

Crerar was on the point of returning to the battery's wagon lines on the afternoon of the 22nd when he observed a greenish haze spreading "along part of our front and to our left. A few minutes later, our eyes begun [sic] to smart and our throats to choke and we understood." He had encountered a small portion of the 160 tons of chlorine gas just released by the Germans into the light north-east wind.

The return was harrowing. Eyes smarting and choking for air, Harry sped off on his bike. At that moment the German barrage lifted from the French lines and concentrated its full might on the Canadians. "It was Hell cut loose – that's all," he recalled. Avoiding the village of St. Julien, which was then going up in "chunks", he set out cross-country until he was forced back onto the St. Julien-Wieltje-Ypres road, which was "getting a lot of attention from the German artillery ... I had so many narrow escapes on my ride back that I haven't stopped marvelling yet." Blown off his bike into a ditch by the concussion from one shell burst within "a couple of yards," he was momentarily stunned but unhurt. Pulling himself up, he got underway minus a few spokes, but clutching a pebble he had grabbed as he lay on the ground; he kept it for the rest of his life as a good luck charm.

Crerar returned to find the teams hooked in, and the limbers, ammunition wagons, and all mounted men moved from their exposed position to the cover of a near-

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"The Second Battle of Ypres" by Richard Jack. The First Canadian Division makes its stand, April 1915.

Survivors move to the rear after a German gas attack, 1915.

by ridge; the old position was already under long-range machine-gun fire. The new position, however, proved little better. The men of the French 45th (Algerian) and 87th (Territorial) Divisions, many of them "badly affected by gas," had begun, he wrote, "pouring over the next ridge [through the battery's wagon lines] — regularly beating it I'm afraid and the German rifle fire came momentarily closer. Their planes were overhead and their shell fire was all over them and us. As the shells caught up to us, I moved the wagons and teams slowly back — no flurry or excitement among our men at all and [I] kept sending orderlies [every ten minutes to try and establish contact with the Battery Commander]."

He later recalled: "I assumed that one of these successive orderlies would have the luck to get through and finally back to me." One did return, carrying orders to take up the gun limbers and move the battery to a position north of the village of Wieltje. Because the German attack had interrupted the relief of Crerar's battery, the left section of that and the right section of the Eighth Battery were fighting as a composite unit and would do so for the rest of the battle. Crerar was responsible for moving these sections.

"We got orders to move the guns. We did — under shell fire." Colonel Mitchell, the Brigade CO, on instructions from Divisional HQ, ordered the harried batteries to withdraw. Driving the horses "at the trot, and...through heavy shell areas at the canter", Crerar reached the Battery HQ near St. Julien, losing one mounted signaller and his horse. He found the Battery cut off from its infantry battalion but "very much in action", although by later accounts to little effect as they "continued to fire to their front rather than engage uncertain targets".

Crerar's men worked through the night limbering the guns for the move. At dusk on the 23rd, they moved out along roads now congested with troops moving up and transports full of gassed and wounded men going back. It was nightfall before they reached their new positions near the GHQ Line just south-west of Wieltje. The situation was now so fluid that the Third Brigade's batteries were less than 400 yards from the Germans, who were pressing down on an open left flank for which the guns were not sighted. A German attack in force over Frezenberg and Bellewarde Ridges to the east caught the battery with guns just unlimbered. Small arms fire caused a number of casualties among the battery's horses and it became obvious the position was untenable:

> There, we had another narrow squeak. The Germans attacked in force and got within a few hundred yards of us. It was a tense quarter of an hour — shell fire and rifle fire this time — the German flares lighting up the blackness. All our batteries had a number of casualties here. I don't think any of us expected to get through.

During a lull in the fighting the battery was ordered to a position west of Potijze which they reached in short order.

Crerar took temporary command of the battery near Potijze, relieving the exhausted C.O. He directed the fire of the battery for the next 20 hours continuously, through the night and into the morning of the 24th. It was frustrating, tough work. The battery was shelled from three sides and was unable to answer calls for help from the 15th Battalion of the 48th Highlanders, under gas and artillery attack as it defended St. Julien.

Ordered to shift his unit by daylight, Crerar was forced to pass through Ypres "chased up by shell fire nearly all the way" in search of a new battery position, only to have the order countermanded:

It was a devil of a place to pass through. I went ahead with two men to try and locate the least dangerous route — an unenviable job — for the only way was to determine where most of the shells were falling. However, we got through losing one man and a horse.

The battery maintained its position at Potijze under constant shelling for another seven days, firing in support of the British, French and Canadian counter-attacks and breaking up German attacks:

Shells came in from three sides here. Our position is fairly ploughed up with their holes. One, just ten feet from No.1 gun is twelve feet in diameter by six deep, yet our battery casualties have been wonderfully low to date. I wonder how long our good fortune will continue.

On 28 April the Germans began shelling the position with a heavier weight of shell, adding to the strain:

Have been shelled very heavily since yesterday afternoon, big fellows, coal-box type, coming over four at a time. The roar of their coming and the frightful concussion of their burst is mighty hard on us all, though our fortune stays of the best. Both my horses were wounded, though slightly, praise be. We are busy firing now as always have been for the last eight days.

Locating the battery's position, the Germans redoubled their efforts on the 30th. "Jack Johnsons" – "plain brutes" – and "coal-boxes", plowed up the area and concussion shook the ground for a quarter mile, sending earth and shell fragments in all directions. The Germans clearly outgunned the Canadians:

The Germans seem to have an unlimited quantity of big guns and howitzers and they surely are not idle. They unfortunately have the battery position located. It takes just plain "guts" to fight our guns under the circumstances let me tell you. Half of us pull out to occupy new positions tonight. I stay to carry on with the remainder and follow tomorrow, God willing. I must confess, I'll be relieved when we arrive there safely, we've had a terribly nerve-wracking ten days of it and a change will be a wonderful relief.

Somehow, he retained a grim humour in the face of the destruction:

It's extraordinary how one becomes adept in "forecasting" shells. We know almost to a yard the line of flight of a shell by the noise it makes and consequently, can economize in the practice of ducking to a wonderful extent. We all have a profound respect for the "Johnsons" — they are plain brutes. They generally come at us in fours — their concussion shakes the very earth for a quarter of a mile around and they send fragments of the shell to about the same radius. The base of one of the 17 inch shells after travelling about half a mile back from where the shell exploded in Wipers, buried itself 10 feet in a field not far from the line, it weighed 164 pounds, a disagreeable little souvenir all right.

Relief came that same day. The exhausted British and French determined to save their strength for the forthcoming Allied offensive against Arras. Recognizing the German artillery's dominance over the whole area as far

"Canadian Artillery in Action" By Kenneth Forbes.

The National Gallery of Canada

as Poperinghe, the Allied commanders withdrew their forces to new positions on the old GHQ Line from Wieltje to Potijze and under Sanctuary Wood. On 1 May, the Divisional batteries scattered around Potijze began their withdrawal. Colonel Mitchell ordered the batteries of Third Brigade moved west of the Yser Canal. It was welcome news.

The battery was blasted for several more days in its new positions; on the 2nd of May, one shell exploded, Crerar recorded, "about twenty paces from where I wrote. It rained dirt and shell splinters for ten seconds after that one struck." It was his last entry for four days. On the 3rd, the Germans attempted one last assault:

> We had a tight half hour of it. The infantry couldn't stick it and had to pull back several hundred of yards but in the meantime our artillery had opened up such a rate of fire along their parapet that the Germans were held behind it and as soon as the gas dissipated, our chaps took up the ground again.

The wind had dispersed the gas and the Allied artillery, including all the Canadian batteries, held the Germans to their parapets until the front lines were re-occupied. The 4th of May found Crerar re-joining the battery near Brielen, "a relief, as in it we only were shelled from one direction". The Canadian Divisional artillery's support of the British Fourth Division continued, but over the next five days, each battery was brought out of the line for some much needed rest. Finally on 6 May, Crerar's battery was sent back for two days of recuperation.

The strain of the constant exposure to shellfire and the unsettling effects of the huge casualties the Canadians had taken during the fighting at Ypres were evident. A few days after the battery was withdrawn from the firing line, an encounter with an acquaintance, serving with the 48th Highlanders, gave Crerar pause:

> Was in Armentières with Alex Mackenzie for a while yesterday. It has escaped wonderfully easily considering how close the Germans are and their usual idea of destroying everything in sight. It's great to see an old friend these days, so many have gone on. There's mighty few of the original 48th left.

News from home, while welcome, left him feeling melancholy. "Felt quite homesick when [Adam] left," he observed after the departure of an old friend, "He was sort of a touch from another world and I am awake for hours thinking and wondering."

There were moments of calm:

> It cleared a bit today and it's mostly warm and summerlike. There seemed to be very little doing any where along the line but then there must be a reaction after three weeks of slaughter. I really can't see how it can last through the summer ... Still we expect action any moment. There's a certain tenseness in the air and troops are continually on the move.

Gone was the bravado of the early weeks:

> The pity of this killing business gets me sometimes. War is so very truly hell and this yard-by-yard fighting finds it at its worst. The gains are so small when it comes to distance, it just resolves itself into a case of counting corpses, if we have fewer than they, it's a "victory". There is no romance in such as that. We'll beat them some day, but they'll never be able to pay their just debt, the swine, not in this world anyway.

The Battle of Second Ypres was Canada's baptism of fire. Canadians, like Harry Crerar, saw war differently after that battle. The romance was gone, replaced by a determination to see it through to the bitter end. He could not know that it would be thirty years, almost to the day, before the fight was finished completely. ◆

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Crerar at War

Harry Crerar was a lieutenant-colonel at Canadian Corps headquarters when the war ended. Between the wars he served in the Permanent Force, attending the British Army Staff College and the Imperial Defence College. He was commandant at Canada's Royal Military College when the Second World War broke out.

He was soon overseas as senior combatant officer at Canadian Military Headquarters. He returned to Canada in 1940 and became Chief of the General Staff. In December 1941 he was appointed to command the Second Canadian Division in England. He briefly commanded 1 Canadian Corps in Italy and later succeeded General A.G.L. McNaughton at the head of the First Canadian Army in England and Northwest Europe, leading a large force of Canadian, British and American troops at the Battle of Hochwald in 1945.

Following the war he served in a number of minor diplomatic posts. He died in 1965.

IGOR GOUZENKO And Canada's Cold War

By Laurence Hannant

Fifty years ago Canada was thrown into the menacing shadows of international espionage when a cipher clerk in the Soviet embassy in Ottawa stuffed 109 documents into his shirt and fled into a humid late summer night seeking asylum. With the defection of Igor Gouzenko the Cold War was born, less than a month after the close of the Second World War.

Ironically, most Canadians would never see the face of the man who abruptly thrust their country into the international spotlight. Adopted by Canada, Gouzenko lived the rest of his life in seclusion, venturing out of hiding only with his head inside a bag. Anonymity, however, has not meant that he has been forgotten. Even today, half a century after his dramatic rejection of the Soviet system, controversy swirls around Gouzenko as historians and writers vie to define his role in the conflict which came to define the second half of the twentieth century.

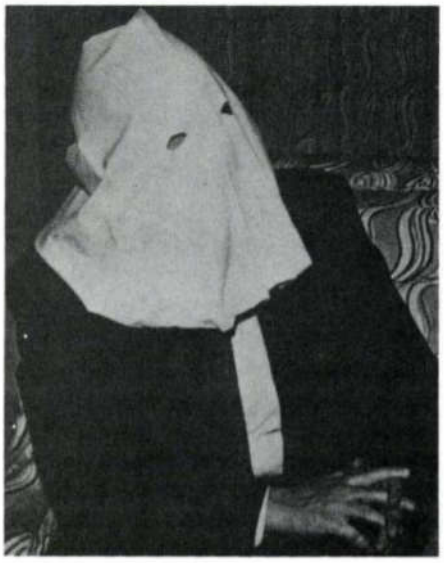
There are no shortage of passionate views on Gouzenko's impact. From one side, journalist Robert Fulford argues that Gouzenko's defection "was the most important thing that ever happened in Canada — in terms of geopolitics." To Fulford, Gouzenko's great service to Canada and the West was to expose the tyrannical nature of the Soviet Union. But Canadian historian Merrily Weisbord sees things differently. She confers on Gouzenko the responsibility for launching this era's preoccupation with national security. The McCarthy-style witch hunt had its origin in Gouzenko's defection, she thinks: "Simply to be a Communist was prejudicial to the state. That was the new Cold War reality. And that's why Gouzenko was so important." In between stands author James Littleton, who contends that Gouzenko did not cause, but did advance, a political process that would have occurred anyway. "He happened to be the right guy at the right time with the right kind of shocking revelations."

Gouzenko's story has become part of Canadian mythology. The legend of which he is a central part tells of a naive Canada having its innocence ripped from it by Soviet espionage, assisted by disloyal Canadians. The roots of that spying go back to the Second World War. The German invasion of the USSR in June 1941 made the Soviet Union an ally of the West, and in 1942 Canada and the USSR established formal diplomatic relations. Each country set up an embassy in the other's capital city.

Both the motive and the opportunity for spying increased during the Second World War. Through the National Research Council, Canada was engaged in research into new military weapons and products, such as the new high explosive RDX. Perhaps more important, Canada was allied with the British and the Americans. In this capacity, Canada shared in some matters of strategic significance and in some scientific research. Most important was the Manhattan Project to create the first Atomic Bomb. The United States ran it on a need-to-know basis, and since Canada was not a central part of the project we did not need to know much. However, British scientists worked in Montreal in order to be physically closer to the American researchers, so they were a tempting target. In general, what secrets Canada had were relatively unimportant, but at the time the Soviets were fishing for anything.

Igor Gouzenko was a lieutenant in the Soviet military and a member of the GRU, the Soviet military intelligence. He specialized in ciphers, codes and decoding, and in 1943 he was posted to Canada to practise this craft. Gouzenko was immediately impressed with Canada. He was delighted and mesmerized by the apparent wealth of Canadian society, by the profusion of goods in the stores and the openness of people and politics. How to remain in this paradise grew to be a preoccupation with him.

It became an urgent problem in 1945, when he was ordered to return to the USSR, possibly for committing a minor security breach. Gouzenko was determined to



Igor Gouzenko: Bagged for safety.

stay, and he calculated the best means to do so.

He carefully marked 109 highly-incriminating documents in his file cabinets and on the evening of 5 September 1945 removed them from the Soviet embassy. He was initially disappointed in his quest for asylum and his hope that Canadian authorities would welcome his intelligence haul. For 36 frantic hours he and his pregnant wife Svetlana, some of the time with an infant son in tow, careered from official to official trying to make someone believe their story and save them from his superiors at the embassy, now alerted to his desertion.

The prime minister, William Lyon Mackenzie King, was alerted to Gouzenko's existence, but he wanted nothing to do with him. King recognized that every country pried into others' closets, but, as he confided to his diary, "I do not believe his story about there being avowed treachery." King had no time for any plan to shelter someone he regarded as a renegade. He wrote that "I was strongly against any step of the kind as certain to create an issue between Russia and Canada, this leading to severance of diplomatic relations." Taking possession of "a secret code book — of a Russian secret code book — would be a source of major complications."

Assured by the head of British intelligence that Gouzenko was a prize catch, Canadian authorities reversed course and took him in. After an initial round of conferences with British and American politicians and intelligence specialists, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police began a painstaking investigation of Gouzenko's leads. The government also secretly prepared a plan to take into custody people suspected of being involved in spying.

For the next five months relations between the Soviet Union and the West over a number of international issues such as control of atomic energy steadily deteriorated. Meanwhile, nothing was made public about Gouzenko's defection. Then, in February 1946 an American journalist, probably alerted by U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover, broadcast an account of the Gouzenko case. Radio columnist Drew Pearson told of 1,700 Soviet spies having been uncovered. Wildly distorted and garbled, the story made great front-page news. "Moscow Steals Nuke Secrets" screamed a front-page headline in the *Toronto Daily Star*. As the leak was calculated to do, the Canadian government was forced to make the issue public and put into effect its plan to delve into the conspiracy.

Under the War Measures Act, still in effect from the Second World War, the cabinet appointed a royal commission headed by two Conservative justices of the supreme court, Roy Kellock and Robert Taschereau. The royal commission's deliberations were conducted in strict secrecy. Thirteen suspects were picked up by the RCMP at dawn and held until they could be interrogated, under oath, by the commission. Some of them waited as long as five weeks, cut off from family, friends or legal advice. After testifying, they were released from the commission's grasp only to be arrested and charged, relying on information which they had been pressured to give to the commission. Despite these coercive methods, of the twenty people who were later brought to trial, just half of them were convicted.

The royal commission hearings highlighted an astute Igor Gouzenko, who very early on developed a shrewd assessment of his importance in the looming anti-Soviet ideological campaign. He pictured his defection as a bid to warn the democratic countries about the danger posed by the Soviet Union. As he later wrote in *This Was My Choice*, the espionage network he exposed constituted just "odds and ends of a big and threatening pattern designed to bring this Canada, this United States, this democracy under Soviet domination." The Soviets were preparing nothing less than a third world war, he insisted.

Amidst the growing tension of the post-war world, media and politicians eagerly picked up this alarming message. When the report of the Kellock-Taschereau Royal Commission was issued in June 1946 it caused a sensation. Overnight, a Canadian government report, 733 pages long and burdened by a murky, 50-word title, became an international best-seller. Two instant books scalped from the report became popular in Britain and the United States. Winston Churchill, preparing a speech to be delivered in Fulton, Missouri, which would coin the phrase the "iron curtain" was shown an early draft copy of the report. The Cold War propaganda campaign was warming up.

The headlines generated by the royal commission's report conveyed the mistaken idea that the Canadian spies Gouzenko had unmasked were responsible for giving the secrets of the Atomic Bomb to the Soviet Union. The truth was far more mundane. The one spy Gouzenko disclosed who had any connection to nuclear secrets was

TORONTO DAILY STAR

40 TO 50 HELD IN SPY CASE RUSSIA NAMED BY MINISTER

FEDERAL CIVIL SERVANTS RESEARCH MEN ACCUSED

HOME AND SPORT EDITION

SPY HUNT MAY SPREAD TO WASHINGTON--REPOR

PRIME MINISTER TOUCHES OFF SENSATIONAL INTRIGUE STORY

BEVIN CLASHES WITH VISHINSKY OVER LEVANT

Claims 1,700 Soviet Spies in Canada, U.S.

POLISH THREAT TO YUGOSLAVIA SEEN BY RUSSIA

Alan Nunn May, a British scientist who worked in Canada and the United States. The rest were prosecuted for passing on information of far less strategic value; some of it had even been passed to the Soviet Union through official channels. Six of the accused, including the only Canadian communist member of parliament, Fred Rose, were convicted of conspiracy. Two others were found guilty of offenses related to procuring a false passport for an alleged Soviet agent in the United States.

Gouzenko's information did, however, offer intriguing if sometimes inconclusive, suggestions about spying outside of Canada. Intelligence agencies in both the United States and Britain were invited to interrogate Gouzenko and investigate further. Although he had no direct data on those countries, what he could provide indicated the existence of an agent in the office of the U.S. Secretary of State and Treasury Department. This began the finger-pointing at Alger Hiss and Harry Dexter White, both of whom would become major targets of the McCarthyist inquisition in Washington.

Gouzenko's defection also gave birth to rampant speculation about spies in Britain's secret services. Gouzenko helped to fuel the vituperative storm of accusations and counter-accusations about alleged Soviet spies there. A soap opera of unparalleled length and malice, the hunt for the third, fourth, fifth and subsequent British spies has been an exercise at once crippling for the British secret service and enriching for a select group of journalists and former intelligence officers.

Indeed, it may be in the international arena where Gouzenko's impact has been greatest. Gouzenko broke the wartime alliance and planted the seed of fear that Soviet moles were quietly working throughout Western society. This was an important part of the creation of a public mood which tolerated the Cold War excesses performed in the name of national security. Indeed, Gouzenko's name is synonymous with the concept of national security as the ultimate authority for stringent controls, chilling experiments on our own citizens and formidable security agencies. Much of this remains in place, despite the end of the Cold War.

After Gouzenko, Canada would not again have a defector of this importance. Internationally, however, the flights of various Soviet agents became periodic opportunities for the West to gain valuable intelligence and at the same time reassert its virtue in the ongoing ideological battle with the Soviet Bloc. Canada's initial fumbling and hesitation about how to respond to Gouzenko's defection was a salutary lesson in what not to do. Thereafter, Western governments moved quickly to embrace anyone who sought to renounce the Soviet system. Gouzenko himself suggested a five-point program for offering asylum, and the plan became standard policy in the West.

Gouzenko died of a heart attack in his Mississauga home in 1982. The attending physician knew him only as Mr. Brown, his favourite alias. At the burial service the minister spoke of him vaguely as a gentleman who had emigrated from Prague.

This highlighted the fact that not many Canadians knew Gouzenko. But it should also be added that many of those who knew him did not like him. Even as they acknowledged his important place in modern Canadian history, his acquaintances often doubted Gouzenko's publicly proclaimed — and endlessly reiterated — claim that he turned to the West to find freedom. Some saw him as nothing more than a mercenary. He defected, they say, for the chance to acquire the array of consumer goods which were the fixation of his life. Whatever his inner motivation for defecting, publicly he always asserted that his act was a great service to Canada and the Western Alliance. With this elevated assessment of his historical importance he was adamant in his claims that Canada had failed to acknowledge or compensate him for his courage.

Gouzenko did, however, come into considerable wealth, and his inability to hold onto the ample money which flowed into his hands is also part of the Gouzenko legend. Willson Woodside, a writer for *Saturday Night* magazine who knew Gouzenko well, asserted that "He went through several fortunes." They included the $50,000 given him for his first major interview, with *Cosmopolitan* magazine in 1947; the $60,000 he earned after his 1953 novel, *The Fall of a Titan*, won the Governor-General's award and became a Book of the Month Club selection; the unnamed sum he received for the ghostwritten account of his defection, *This Was My Choice*; and $75,000 for the film rights to it (which Hollywood made into the film *The Iron Curtain*); various private and public annuities and pensions; and countless loans from friends, sympathizers and convenient wallets.

Gouzenko's willingness to retell his story in exchange for cash was legendary. In 1958, Peter Gzowski, then an editor at *Maclean's* magazine, asked how to obtain an interview with Gouzenko. "All you do is run a cheque for $500 up the flagpole on the Maclean-Hunter building," he was told, "and he'll be there."

THE MOST AMAZING PLOT IN 3300 YEARS OF RECORDED ESPIONAGE!
DANA ANDREWS · GENE TIERNEY
THE IRON CURTAIN
JUNE HAVOC · BERRY KROEGER · EDNA BEST · STEFAN SCHNABEL · NICHOLAS JOY · EDUARD FRANZ · FREDERIC TOZERE
WILLIAM A. WELLMAN
SOL C. SIEGEL
20th

Sensational in 1945, Gouzenko's message became routine in 1955, tiresome in 1965 and pathetic in 1975. Until his last days in 1982 Gouzenko harped on a theme and in language that everyone but the most strident cold warriors had abandoned in the detente era beginning in the late 1960s. To the end he seemed incapable of escaping the world of spy vs. spy, and remained encapsulated from the changing ideological climate in his adopted country.

Gouzenko's utter conviction that the Soviets were plotting his death led him to adopt a variety of disguises and subterfuges — mostly ludicrously transparent — to avoid revealing his identity. The trademark bag over his head became so farcical, and still so familiar to Canadians, that journalist Ian Adams could successfully parody it in an "Igor Gouzenko Look-Alike Contest" in *This Magazine*. The contest was won by James Littleton,

who submitted a photo of himself with a bag over his head wearing an FBI T-shirt and holding a copy of Karl Marx's *Das Kapital* in one hand and a glass of brandy in the other.

That contest was one of the few instances where Gouzenko failed to sue anyone he thought besmirched his character. He was determined to control his place in the history books, and he frequently initiated libel suits to suppress interpretations of his conduct which he thought were not flattering. More than a dozen authors in Canada and abroad learned that through unpleasant experience. He even sued his lawyers for not pursuing the libel cases well enough. These suits were not usually decided in his favour, but their number alone forced writers and publishers to think twice about printing negative views of him.

Fifty years after his defection and thirteen after his death, the significance of Gouzenko's act is still being debated. Gouzenko was not the first Soviet defector who unveiled the extent of the international spying going on. In the 1930s Britain had seen several defections and spy disclosures. But Gouzenko was important because for the four years between June 1941 and September 1945 the West had been allied with the Soviet Union. It was always a marriage of convenience. Meeting early in 1942, Western intelligence agencies looked beyond the conclusion of the war against fascism and spoke frankly about the threat of communism in the post-war years. They were preparing for the Cold War years before Gouzenko gave them the official justification to do so. But Gouzenko's act signalled the close of the paper alliance with the Soviet Union and the opening of a period of hostilities which constantly threatened war, but which fortunately never launched it.

One common mistake about Gouzenko's impact is that his revelations began the security inquiries into civil servants and others in the Canadian state. It is widely believed that before 1945 there were no security clearances for public servants. In fact, the RCMP had been carrying out security screening of civil servants from 1931. During the Second World War alone the RCMP conducted inquiries into some two million Canadians in war plants, government employment and the military. Gouzenko's disclosures were nonetheless important, in that they provided a pretext for continuation of the security screening operation, now officially sanctioned and recognized by the government.

The same was true for Canada's own espionage activities. During the Second World War, Canada actively spied on enemy, neutral and allied countries alike. This interception of telecommunications signals was done through the Examination Unit, a special project of the National Research Council and the Department of External Affairs. Even though Canada was formally allied with the Soviet Union, we systematically recorded the signals to and from the Soviet embassy in Ottawa. This information was shared with similar organizations in Britain and the United States, the product of which came

Gouzenko: Still brown-bagging it.

to be known under the code name ULTRA. When it came to spying, no one was innocent.

Gouzenko contributed important knowledge to this unit and helped to extend its life beyond the war. The documents he brought with him allowed the Allies to compare his plain language telegrams with the wartime signals they had monitored but had not been able to decode. Gouzenko was also a cipher clerk, meaning that the most significant long-term intelligence result of his defection was not the spies who were immediately identified by the royal commission but those who were revealed by painstaking decoding of Soviet telecommunications traffic years after 1945. Indeed, this led to the 1952 arrest and execution of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, perhaps the most controversial case in Cold War America.

Just before Gouzenko's appearance on the scene Canadian authorities were wrestling with the problem of how to justify continuing the signals monitoring arrangement with the U.S. and Britain. Gouzenko solved that dilemma in one dramatic coup. International agreements were soon signed through which Canada became a permanent — although junior — partner in the worldwide eavesdropping on telegraph, telephone, and now fax and computer communications traffic which goes on to this day.

Perhaps the closing irony on Gouzenko is that the disguise which characterized his life followed him into death. After he collapsed of a heart attack he was buried in a suburban Toronto cemetery. But as in life, in death his identity is concealed. Thirteen years after the end of his life no marker announces the resting place of Igor Gouzenko. This gravestone has, metaphorically, a bag over it, just as he appeared whenever he was in public. The secret of who lies beneath it is secure. ◆

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Playing Football The Canadian Way

When McGill met Harvard in 1874 an old game took a new direction

By Eric Zweig

For the first 92 years of the twentieth century, Canadian football was the only successful professional team sport in the world which was played solely in Canada. Yet in just three short years, as American cities invade the Canadian game, the letters CFL have become more of an anachronism than an acronym.

Football in Canada is roughly as old as Confederation itself and, like so many of the institutions that helped form the country, owes much of its development to two major influences: British and American. England is the birthplace of football, though the origin of the game is claimed by many nations. The ancient Greeks played a game that resembled it. A Roman version was known as *harpastum.* It is thought in some circles that Roman soldiers might have introduced the game to England, where it was known by the third century A.D. A more colourful version of the roots of the game comes from the Danish invasion and occupation of England in the eleventh century. The story goes that a number of Danes were killed and buried on the battlefield, only to be disinterred years later during ploughing of the fields by English farmhands. As the Danish skulls were dug up, the farmhands would make a game of kicking them around the field.

The first actual mention of football in England is found in Fitzstephen's *History of London,* published about 1175, and the game became more and more popular throughout the ensuing centuries. By now, the items being kicked were usually inflated cows' or pigs' bladders. From the 1300s to the 1500s, football was often banned by a series of English kings. It was thought the game was taking soldiers away from the more relevant task of practising archery.

But football flourished. By Shakespeare's time the game was described as a "friendlie kind of fyghte". A French traveller, M. Misson, described the game in 1698 as a useful and charming exercise *(exercise utile et charmant).* By the nineteenth century, football was well-established in England and in 1863 the Football Association was formed and the rules were codified. Association Football, however, as the game became known, was actually what North Americans call soccer.

The event that sparked the evolution of soccer into football is said to have taken place in 1823. William Webb Ellis, a schoolboy at Dr. Thomas Arnold's school, Rugby, frustrated during a soccer game, shocked teammates and opponents alike by picking up the ball and running with it after missing a kick. The move was a blatant violation of the rules as they existed at the time. Ellis was reviled for his unsportsmanlike behaviour and his embarrassed team captain was forced to apologize for the misconduct. But the move caught on. Though it may or may not have any more truth than the American myth that Abner Doubleday invented baseball, a tablet, placed by the Old Rugbeian Society in the wall of the Head Master's garden at Rugby to commemorate the event, has the following inscription:

> This stone commemorates the exploit of William Webb Ellis, who with a fine disregard for the rules of football as played in his time, first took the ball in his arms, and ran with it, thus originating features of the Rugby Game, A.D. 1823.

By 1871, the rules of the new game were formalized in England with the formation of the Rugby Football Union.

Both soccer and rugby are known to have been played in Canada prior to their gaining of official status in England. Though sources differ, it seems a football game was played at the University of Toronto in 1861. The Canadian Football Hall of Fame indicates the game was played on Saturday, 9 November, 1861. Sir William Mulock, later the University's chancellor, took part in this game. His reminiscences indicate the game was likely a formless kind of soccer with limited ball-handling permitted. Rugby was the game in Montreal, with accounts showing the first contest there was played between a team of officers from the English troops garrisoned in the city and a team of civilians, mainly from McGill University, in October of 1865 or 1866.

Stained glass window in the Canadian Football Hall of Fame, Hamilton, Ontario, depicts four stages in the development of Canadian football: 1900, 1920, 1950, and the present. From the time Earl Grey (below) donated the cup in 1909, until the mid-1920s, university teams were the Grey Cup champions. They were replaced by the senior city leagues from 1925-45, who continued to compete for the cup until the 1950s, when the professional teams began to dominate. (Photographs courtesy of the Canadian Football Hall of Fame & Museum, Hamilton, Ontario).

By the 1870s, rugby was surpassing soccer as the sport of choice in Canada. Its growth was aided in the country's universities because it could be played under worse field conditions than soccer, meaning games could be arranged later into the fall, allowing a better fit into the college year. Outside the schools, in the athletic clubs of the era, rugby's autumn scheduling gave it a much more favourable fit in the sports schedule, bridging the gap between hockey in the winter and baseball and lacrosse in the spring and summer.

Rowing clubs were among the first groups in Canada to take to rugby. The rugged nature of the game was thought to provide excellent off-season training for rowing. Furthermore, because rugby relied more on strength than skill, it could be mastered more easily than soccer. The Argonaut Rowing Club, founded in 1872, fielded its first rugby team in 1873; Montreal's Britannia Club and the Ottawa Rowing Club were quick to follow suit.

In 1874, a series of games were scheduled that would eventually change the sport of rugby into the modern games of both Canadian and American football. In that year, the McGill team challenged Harvard University to two games — home and home — to demonstrate the English game as it was being played in Canada. The Harvard faculty balked. (Some sources say the school did not trust its youth in "the frozen North" —

McCord Museum, Notman Photographic Archives

Harvard and McGill football match at Montreal in the fall of 1874. McGill players are in the white pants. Canadian and American football developed from these games between Harvard and McGill. From a composite photo produced in William Notman's Montreal studio.

though it was May — and worried they might "lose their scalps or fail their exams"). Instead, it was agreed the two games would be played at Cambridge, Massachusetts on 14 and 15 May 1874 — the first contested under the rules of the game as played by the American school, the second under McGill's hybrid rugby rules.

The first intercollegiate football game in the United States had taken place five years before McGill's challenge to Harvard. On 6 November 1869, Princeton met Rutgers at New Brunswick, New Jersey. Princeton won the game 6-4. The contest featured 25 men to a side and a round, black rubber ball that could be kicked or butted with the shoulder. It was, in fact, English-style soccer played according to the Princeton Rules. In 1871, much to the dismay of the rest of the Ivy League, Harvard adopted what came to be called the Boston Game, which allowed holding and running with the ball. It would be the Boston Game that Harvard would play in the first game against McGill.

Under their own rules, which included the use of a round soccer ball, Harvard beat McGill 3-0 in the opening game of their set on 14 May 1874. When it came time to play under Canadian rules the following day, it was discovered that McGill's oval-shaped rugby ball had been forgotten or mislaid. Apparently, a morning spent in the sporting-goods stores of Boston could not turn up such a ball and so Harvard's round soccer ball had to be used once again.

Other stories, too, have arisen about the game. Some sources say McGill showed up at Harvard one man short of a 12-man squad. The game had to be played with 11 men, thus explaining why to this day American football is an 11-man game. However, rugby rules stated that the game was to be contested by 15 players per side, so if McGill did have just 11 men (as the evidence seems to indicate) they were, in fact, *four* men short. It appears that the Harvard players were well aware of this numerical fact, as they would field a team of 15 in subsequent matches.

As for the match on 15 May, the McGill players demonstrated superior skill in the mechanics of their game, but the size and shape of the round ball made it awkward to hold and, as a result, the contest concluded in a scoreless tie. Nonetheless, the game caught on. The editor of the Harvard *Magenta* considered it to be much better "than the somewhat sleepy game now played by our men." The *Harvard Graduates' Magazine* of 1905 explains further that "Harvard then took up the rugby game, discarding its rubber ball and style of play." Harvard decided to use the oval-shaped ball, the drop kick and the free kick. Harvard adopted the Canadian game.

Now that the Americans had picked up the ball, they were quick to run with it. The United States was to become the dominant influence on football in Canada, though the desire to remain true to rugby's British roots ensured that change would come much more slowly on the northern side of the border.

Harvard paid a return visit to McGill in the autumn of 1874 and beat the Montreal school by three touchdowns. The series between the two schools would continue into the early 1880s, but in the meantime, Harvard had introduced the sport to its arch-rivals at Yale.

On 13 November 1875, at Hamilton Park in New Haven, Connecticut, Harvard faced Yale in front of 2,000 spectators who had paid 50 cents apiece for the privilege of viewing the event. Harvard won the game 4-0, but Yale, who along with the rest of the Ivy League had for two years refused to play Harvard under its Boston Rules, was won over. One year later, on 23 November 1876, Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Princeton met to adopt the rugby rules. But Yale wanted changes. Inspired by David Schaff, a student from Eton College in England who had enrolled at the American institution, Yale had already begun playing an 11-man game. (Eton, because of a brick wall that limited the playing area at the school, had devised a variation of rugby known as "The Wall Game", which employed just 11 men per side). When the other schools insisted on the 15-man game, Yale refused to join the new Intercollegiate Football Association.

Yale finally agreed to join the new football body in 1879, and with team captain Walter Camp in charge, change would be rapid. Eleven-man football was approved by the association in 1880. At the same time, the size of the field was cut from 140 by 70 yards to 110 by 53. With Camp, "the Father of American Football", leading the way, innovations in the 1880s came swiftly. The rugby scrum, where players lock heads, necks, and shoulders to fight for the ball, was abandoned. A scrimmage line was introduced and gave ball possession to the centre, who would snap it into the backfield. Blocking was introduced. Soon, Camp was gaining fame as a coach, designing a signalling system to indicate predetermined tactical plays. In 1882 a system of downs was established, stating that the team in possession could keep the ball provided it made at least *five* yards in *three* downs. Camp also revised the scoring system, giving a larger value to touchdowns than field goals, placing the game's emphasis on running, not kicking.

In little more than ten years since the Harvard-McGill matches of 1874, the Americans had all but abandoned soccer and, true to their national style, had changed the rules of rugby so much that it bore little resemblance to the English-Canadian game. Football in the United States had become uniquely American. Canada, also true to its national style, took a much more cautious approach.

Though still playing with 15 men per team, Canadians, like the Americans, abandoned the rugby scrum in the 1880s, but with a difference. In a compromise between the American and English rules, a three-man scrimmage was introduced whereby a centre and two teammates attempted to keep the opposition's three-man line at bay while the centre tried to heel the ball into his backfield. Although less radical than the American system, the three-man scrimmage made it possible for a team to retain possession of the ball indefinitely and

Canadian Football Hall of Fame and Museum

Varsity's Smirle Lawson (with ball), the original "Big Train", hurdles McGill tacklers, 1909. At right, Lionel Conacher (1900-1954), Canada's "athlete of the century", was also known as the "Big Train". He excelled at football, hockey, lacrosse, baseball, boxing and wrestling.

Glenbow Archives, Calgary

Parade in Calgary, 1 December 1948, to welcome home the Stampeders after their Grey Cup victory. The Calgary fans launched a new, lively era of Grey Cup festivities.

thereby reduced much of the unpredictable flow of rugby. Still, where the American game had become one of repeated stops and starts, the Canadian game retained more motion.

Not until the turn of the century did Canadian football begin to make dynamic changes. In 1899, with concerns voiced about the fact that Canadians were no longer playing the English game, but were not playing the American game either, J.T.M. Burnside offered a new set of rules. "Thrift" Burnside, as he was known, was a former captain of the University of Toronto team. He proposed, among other things, limiting teams to 12 men per side, adopting the American snapback system, and instituting rules requiring teams to gain *ten* yards on three downs or relinquish possession of the ball. (The Americans didn't move to ten yards until 1906 when President Roosevelt demanded changes to make the game safer after 18 players were killed in 1905. In 1912, a fourth down was added).

While the Burnside rules caught on in Toronto, and were experimented with elsewhere, it was years before many of the innovations were adapted by the major provincial and national governing bodies that oversaw the sport. The three-down rule did not come into vogue until 1907 and rosters would continue to fluctuate between 15 and 14 players until 1921, when the 12-man game was finally adopted. The American snap was also not established in Canada until 1921.

The year 1921 is indeed a significant one in Canadian football. It marked the first year that the Grey Cup became truly a national game and Canadian football began to take on its East-West identity.

In 1909, Lord Grey, Governor-General of Canada, had donated a trophy to symbolize the rugby football champion of Canada. The Grey Cup, as it came to be known, was originally open only to teams registered with the Canadian Rugby Union (the sport's main governing body). Among these was the Interprovincial Rugby Football Union, known as the Big Four, which was made up of the Ottawa Rough Riders, Toronto Argonauts, Hamilton Tigers, and Montreal Football Club. No western unions were yet affiliated with the CRU as no solid western unions yet existed. Not until 1911, when the Western Canada Rugby Football Union was founded, was a Western challenge made for the Grey Cup. The Calgary Tigers were denied a chance because the Western Union was not fully affiliated with the CRU. The WCRFU finally joined the CRU in 1921. The Edmonton Eskimos were permitted to challenge for the Grey Cup and travelled east to face the Toronto Argonauts. Led by Lionel Conacher and Harry Batstone, the Argos humiliated Edmonton 23-0.

The West did not take its Grey Cup defeat lying down. While Edmonton, Regina and Winnipeg failed repeatedly throughout the 1920s, the Western teams pushed for change. Without the population base of the East, Western teams began importing American players. Under pressure to adopt more American rules, the CRU allowed forward passing in the West in 1929 and also legalized it for the Grey Cup game. (Still, the Hamilton Tigers beat the Regina Roughriders 14-3).

The East balked at forward passing. Ted Reeve, football star and sportswriter, complained that "the forward pass has brought in so many complicated rules in the U.S. that much of their best ball carrying... is [now] done by the referees". Despite Eastern opposition, in 1931 the CRU approved forward passing for all leagues. Still the West couldn't win the Grey Cup. Until 1935. Led by Fritz Hanson of North Dakota, and several other Americans, Winnipeg beat the Hamilton Tigers 18-12.

Now it was the East that took action. A rule was passed in 1936 restricting the maximum number of imports on a team to five. A second rule was passed stating that only those players who had lived in Canada for a full year could compete in the Grey Cup game. For years afterward, bickering about the rules between the East and West would become as much a sport as football itself.

If 1921 marked the year the Grey Cup took on a national identity, 1948 was the year it became a national institution. The Calgary Stampeders came East to Toronto to play the Ottawa Rough Riders for the Grey Cup. Calgary fans, equipped with horses and chuck wagons, piled onto eastbound trains with plans to turn Toronto into party headquarters Western-style. Calgarians roped off City Hall centre at Queen Street and Bay to hold a giant square dance. Grey Cup legend has it that one overzealous fan rode a horse through the lobby of the Royal York Hotel. Spurred on by all the excitement, the Grey Cup game (which the Stampeders won 12-7) drew its largest crowd to that point in history, and suddenly Canada had a national sports craze uniquely its own.

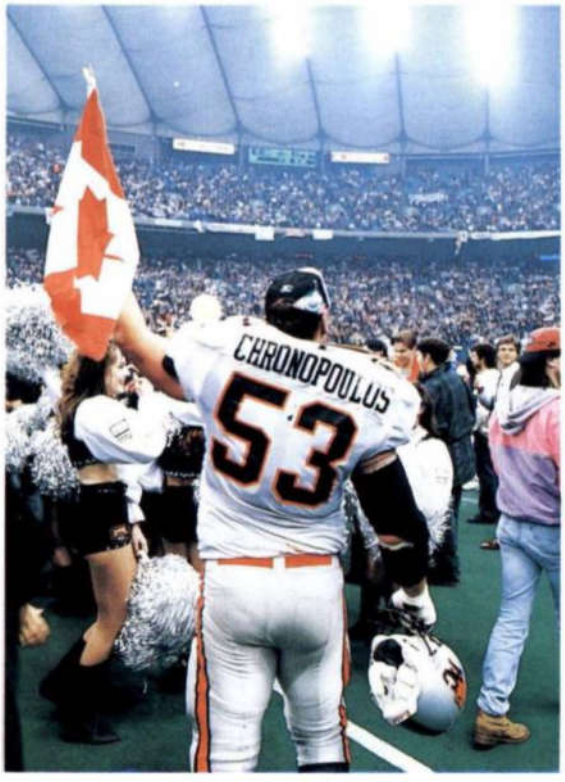
Officially in 1948, Canadian football was still an amateur game. Not until the 1950s was that pretence dropped. At the time, the major leagues in the country were the Interprovincial Rugby Football Union (the Big Four) and the Western Interprovincial Football Union. In 1956 the Canadian Football Council (CFC) was formed to oversee the two leagues. In 1958, the CFC withdrew from the Canadian Rugby Union and was renamed the Canadian Football League. Two years later, the Big Four became the Eastern Conference. The WIFU became the Western Conference in 1961.

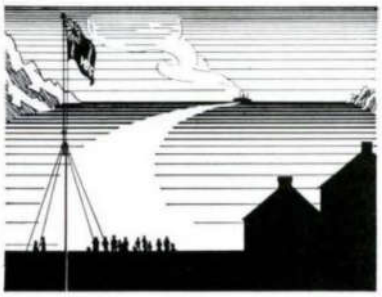
Football in Canada was flourishing. From the 20,013 who saw the Grey Cup game in 1948, crowds grew to over 60,000 in the 1970s and early '80s, but by the end of the decade the fortunes of the league had begun to fail. American expansion of the CFL began in 1993, when the Sacramento Goldminers were admitted into the league. Just one year later, Baltimore was playing for the Grey Cup (though beaten out for the "Canadian" championship by the British Columbia Lions). This season, the CFL all but assured that eventually the Grey Cup will head State-side when it abandoned the traditional East-West format for a North-South divisional set-up. League insiders practically admit the "C" in CFL will stand for Continental, not Canadian, within another year or two.

Those who support American expansion claim it is the only way to save Canadian football, but what of the game will be left to save? The sport north of the border has borrowed much from America in the past. Only time will tell what the outcome will be this time. And time may be running out. ◆

Eric Zweig is a Toronto freelance writer with a particular interest in sports history.

The last hurrah? Veteran B.C. Lion Lui Passaglia kicks the winning field goal to defeat Baltimore in the first Canada-U.S. Grey Cup contest, 1994. (Colour photos by John E. Sokolowski/JOGO Inc.).





News of the Fur Trade

A 'Beaver' Treasury

One of the most popular features in *The Beaver* during the 1930s appeared in small type in the back of the magazine. "News of the Fur Trade" consisted of reports from offices and districts of the Hudson's Bay Company's vast and far-flung network of fur-trade posts; and at year's end, a report of the annual "summer" voyage to the Arctic of the Company's famous supply ship, the *Nascopie*. Excerpts reprinted here are from the September and December 1939 issues of *The Beaver*, and provide some fascinating glimpses of a remote civilization on the verge of irrevocable change. The long isolation of the North was rapidly being broken down by advancing technology: planes, radio, and electricity — a trend that would be accelerated by the impending war. For all these changes however, one theme remains constant in these reports: man and his new inventions were still no match for the forces of nature.

London Office News

September, 1939.

A collection of pastel portraits of well known figures of the Canadian North by Miss Kathleen Shackleton was exhibited at the Imperial Institute, London, during the period 26th June–31st July. These portraits were commissioned by the Company for its Archives, and they have been the subject of favourable comment in the press and much admiration by the many people who have now seen them.

9th October, 1939.

Since publication of the last news items from the London Office, a state of war has arisen, which has had repercussions on the Company's operations.

The Governor [Patrick Ashley Cooper], following a request by the Government to undertake work of national importance, has accepted the position of Director-General of Finance at the Ministry of Supply.

Many members of the London staff have enrolled in various services. Included in these are twenty-six out of the staff of seventy-one in the London Fur Warehouse alone.

We regret to record the death of E. Luff, watchman, who has been killed on service. He was a member of the Royal Naval Reserve, called up just before the outbreak of war.

It is probable that as time goes on others will be called upon to serve the country in some capacity or other.

During August, Professor Marcel Giraud continued his research in connection with his work on the history of the half-breeds of the western provinces of Canada, and Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Ellison, of Oregon, visited the Archives Department on October 4, but were only able to see a negligible proportion of our records, the greater part of which has been removed to the country for protection during the war.

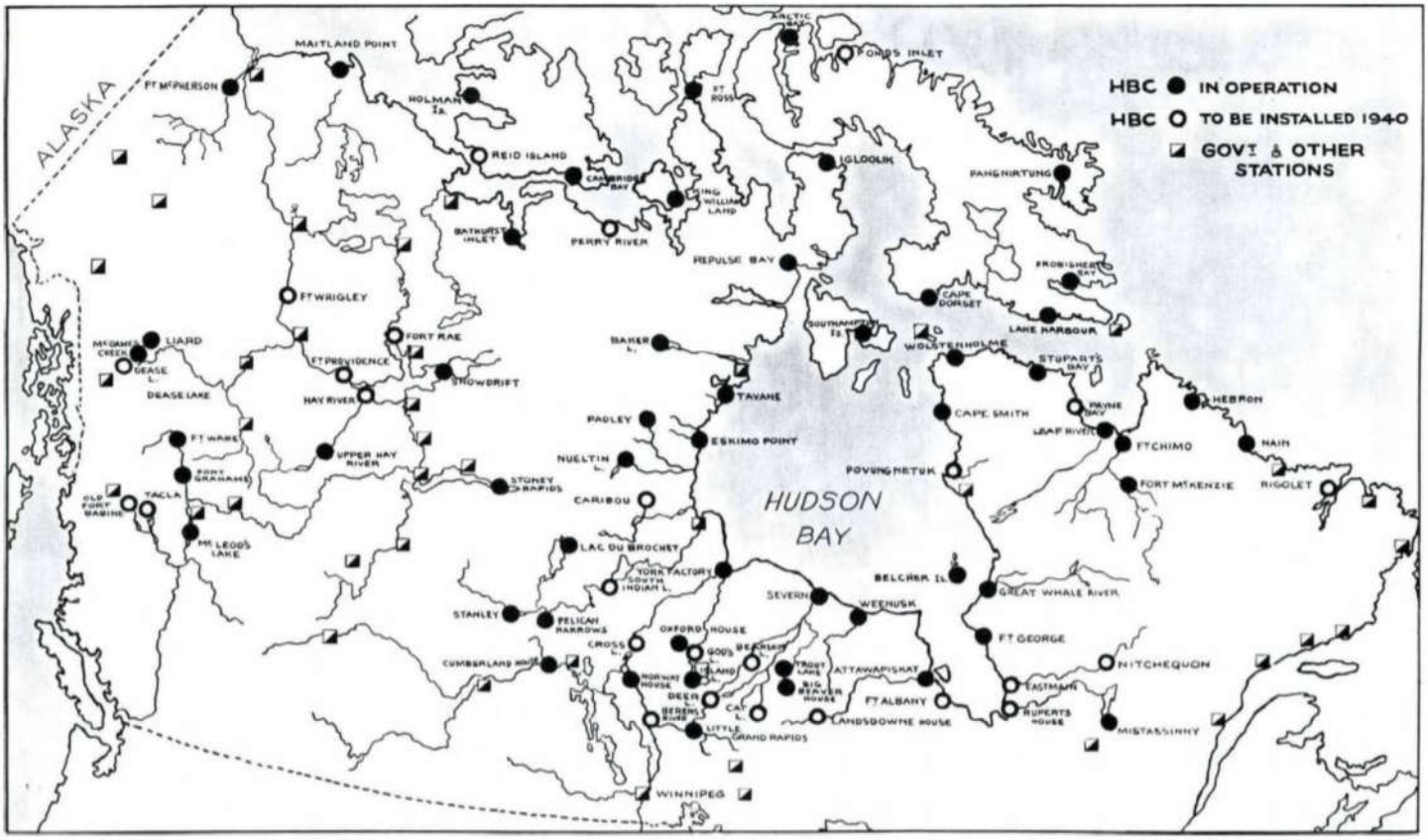
In connection with air raid precautions, the corporation of London have taken over Beaver Hall for the purpose of a public air raid shelter but arrangements have been made under which the Company's and other public fur auctions may be held in the sale room on the dates announced.

Fur Trade Commissioner's Office

On June 25, the Governor arrived back in Winnipeg after an historic inspection trip in the Company's Beechcraft covering 4,685 miles. With him were P. A. Chester, General Manager, R. H. Chesshire [Manager, Fur Trade Dept.] and Paul Davoud [Supervisor of Air Transport], with Harry Winny, pilot, and Duncan McLaren, air engineer. Leaving Edmonton on June 18, the party visited 28 posts, the Mackenzie River Transport and two shipyards during the 8-day trip. The Governor was delighted with the performance of the new plane and with the opportunity of personally viewing conditions at so many posts within such a short space of time. The peak of the schedule was reached on the third day of the trip when nine posts were visited and 960 miles flown. The arrival of the trim, twin-engined monoplane with the HBC ensign on the fuselage and with its distinguished visitors provided a great thrill at each post. The Governor really saw the Fur Trade in the raw on this trip. Posts were not forewarned and there are many stories of the surprised reactions of the staff when they strolled down to meet a new plane and found the Governor aboard.

Ralph Parsons, Fur Trade Commissioner, has recently completed a history making trip in the Company's Beechcraft. In all, the trip covered 3,200 miles and it was the first time that a Company official had visited posts on the east side of Hudson Bay by aeroplane. It is also the first time anyone has seen the *Nascopie* off at Montreal and then joined her again at Hudson Strait as Mr. Parsons did.

On May 26 fourteen more boys graduated from the Winnipeg Training School. It was a big day for these boys as each received a handshake and the good wishes of the Governor, who attended the closing session of the sixth class to leave the Training School. The Governor presented each apprentice with a Brief History of the Company and was greatly interested in learning to which posts they were being assigned.



Radio stations of the HBC fur trade private commercial system, from "The Beaver", June 1940. From 5 experimental stations in 1936, the network grew to 54 by 1939 and 101 by the end of the war.

By now all posts will have heard of the dietary research being undertaken for the Company by Dr. F. F. Tisdall and his associates in the Department of Paediatrics, University of Toronto. Dr. Tisdall has achieved distinction as an authority on nutrition problems and the Company has been fortunate in securing his co-operation. The question of proper diet is one of vital importance to the Fur Trade staff and any improvements effected will be a material contribution to welfare in the North.

Conservationists Donald Denmark and Leonard Butler are busy again in F.T.C.O., following their return from summer work which kept Denmark on the job at Cumberland House Marsh, while Butler was occupied in research work relating to musquash at Steeprock.

Several members of Fur Trade staff have answered the call to the colours. Jim Donald, formerly in charge of consignment work, is now on active duty as lieutenant with the Royal Canadian Navy. Jock Runcie, who has been in charge of the Training School, is a lieutenant in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders; Bob McDowall, of the Winnipeg Depot, is in the Air Force. W. E. C. Tutching, of St. Lawrence District, has enlisted with the Royal Canadian Signal Corps; J. T. Rayside of Fort Resolution and R. F. Millard of Misty Lake also left to join up. Other enlistments from Hudson's Bay House include Alec Thompson from the mailing office, Ted Webb of the Superintendent of Buildings Office. All these men carry with them our warm wishes for a safe and speedy return.

In August the Company Beechcraft made another outstanding flight which started from Edmonton on August 10 and concluded in Winnipeg on August 21. The route covered the Mackenzie River to Aklavik and Tuktuk; thence eastward along the Arctic Coast to Coppermine, with a side trip north to Reid Island, and Holman Island; on to Bathurst Inlet, Cambridge Bay, Perry River, and King William Land; overland

The HBC Governor and party return to Winnipeg, 25 June 1939 after a 4,700-mile tour by airplane of northern posts. Left to right: H. Winny, Governor Cooper, D. McLaren, P. Davoud, P.A. Chester, R.H. Chesshire.

Richard Harrington

Trader Henry Voisey and customer, at the Padley Post, ca. 1940.

to Baker Lake, down to Churchill, and home via Norway House to Winnipeg. On the trip were Mr. C. S. Riley of the Canadian Committee, R. H. Chesshire, Dr. Harry Ebbs of Toronto, and Paul Davoud, with Harry Winny, pilot, and Dunc McLaren, air engineer. This trip gave Mr. Riley a comprehensive insight into fur trade operations over a wide area, and enabled Mr. Chesshire to make his first inspection of the Western Arctic. Dr. Ebbs, who is an associate of Dr. F. F. Tisdall of Toronto, gained first-hand knowledge of living conditions and medical problems in the North.

Dr. Ebbs worked out a full-time job for himself on the trip by his examination of Company staff and natives. He was particularly interested in matters relating to northern diet, methods of preparing food and the effect of northern foods on health in general, both among whites and natives.

The latest development in Dr. Tisdall's work is the preparation of a special vitamin mineral tablet specially prepared to compensate for the more obvious deficiencies of northern diet. A supply of these tablets will shortly be sent to all accessible fur traders and their families, and it is expected their use will be an important contribution to good health in the North.

Early in September an interesting and important seminar conference was held in Toronto, under the auspices of Toronto and Yale Universities with the support of the Carnegie Corporation, to consider problems relating to the welfare of the North American Indian today. Authorities in many phases of Indian work were present at the conference, and many interesting papers were delivered and discussions held. As Company representative at the conference, R. H. G. Bonnycastle presented a paper on the role of the trader in Indian affairs.

In the death of J. J. G. Rosser at Prince Albert June 2, 1939, many of the older fur traders lost a sincere friend. Mr. Rosser was a staunch HBC man and very highly esteemed by all who knew him. He originally entered the service in 1886, at Fort Qu'Appelle, and saw service at many historic posts during his association of nearly fifty years with the Company.

Mackenzie River Transport

From the time of the spring break-up the transport fleet has been rushing supplies to Hudson's Bay posts and customers down North. Outboard engines, flour, sugar and canned goods have made up regular cargos, while special shipments of fresh goods have been carried by the two refrigerator barges. Tankers have taken thousands of gallons of fuel oil and gasoline to the mines.

Capt. D. Elyea of the S.S. *Mackenzie River* turned over command of the steamer to Capt. Lumb at Simpson, on her return from her first trip north to Norman oil wells. He then piloted the *Hearne Lake* up the Liard River to Nelson Forks and back in nine days — another fastest time on record. He has since transferred back on the steamer, and will take her through to Tuktuk.

Archbishop Owen, Primate of all Canada, and his brother Dr. Owen, made the first trip north on the *Distributor*. They enjoyed the journey, and before leaving Aklavik by plane the Archbishop consecrated All Saint's Church the Cathedral of the Arctic.

Western Arctic District

Tuesday, 6th June, saw the usual crowd at the Canadian National Railways station in Edmonton saying good-bye to friends and relatives who were leaving by train to connect with the S.S. *Distributor*. Among the travellers were Hudson's Bay Company men, missionaries and Royal Canadian Mounted Policemen, some going to western Arctic points and others not quite so far.

So far this summer, everything seems to be going well with

HBC Collection

HBC sternwheeler "Distributor" at Fort Norman, 1942, with barges laden with bulldozers and trucks destined for the Canol Project. By J.S. Hallam, R.C.A.

the delivery of supplies to this district for the coming season. Last year, we had the sinking of Barge 300; the previous year, the crushing of the M.V. *Fort James* in the ice; and the year before that, the M.V. *Fort James* was again in difficulties due to ice, etc. This year, the latest reports show the supplies well on their way to Tuktuk. Bankslanders who arrived at Tuktuk by the middle of July, which is exceptionally early for them, report no trouble with ice. The M.V. *Fort Ross* called at Coppermine on 18th July from her winter quarters at Bernard Harbour, and will be calling at Reid Island and Baillie Island before going to Tuktuk to pick up supplies. She is expected to leave Tuktuk westward fully ten days ahead of schedule. In fact, everything is so rosy that we are almost afraid to comment for fear something unforeseen may happen!

As tonnage is expected to be lighter this year the M.V. *Fort Ross* will be able to handle it all and go through to King William Land post without any difficulty. Scotty Gall will act as pilot to King William Land, returning eastward with the vessel to Cambridge Bay, from which point the M.V. *Fort Ross* will proceed to Tuktuk for winter quarters.

The R.C.M.P. schooner *St. Roch* has left the Arctic. She arrived in Vancouver in October. The *Audrey B* also returned to Vancouver. While southbound in the Pacific, she was reported as a submarine and created quite a stir.

Mackenzie-Athabasca District

A visiting trapper told us recently he did not intend to stay over in Edmonton to visit the annual fair. He wanted to get back to the Territories where the rivers were rising at last, where there was no continual talk of impending war and where, he said, he was thankful there were no rival politicians each with a certain cure for the world's ills.

During the past summer, the chimneys of the old Rocky Mountain House post were restored and the work has just been inspected by Judge Howay of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board. These chimneys are all that is left of the old post which played a prominent part in the settlement of the West.

W. R. Garbutt, manager of Fort Nelson, has had to return to Edmonton to receive further treatment for a severe frost bite incurred last winter. He is now fit for duty again, and we would not be surprised to hear of his marriage one of these days.

British Columbia District

Operations in hydraulic mining at Boulder Creek in the McDames area have begun again, and also reconnaissance of the Liard River - Sifton Pass section of the British Columbia - Alaska highway project.

The ice in Summit Lake broke on the 8th of May. Freighting to McLeod's Lake commenced without delay, and the first trip to Fort Grahame and Fort Ware was completed during the third week of May.

Two days of annual sports were enjoyed at Babine in early June. Indians from numerous villages in the vicinity attended and teams from as far afield as Hazelton and Kispiox, points on

George Horner Collection

Fur-trade apprentices of the late 1930s received radio training from HBC radio engineer George Horner. They also took courses in meteorology, carpentry, accounting, merchandising and cooking.

the C. N. Railway, competed in baseball and other events.

J. Milne and S. G. L. Horner returned on July 26 from a trip to northern points, the former having completed the usual inspection work and the latter having established short-wave radio stations at McDames Creek, Liard, Fort Ware and McLeod's Lake, all of which were put on the air successfully.

J. M. S. MacLeod, post manager at Liard, reports that the new short-wave transmitter is operating very well, that he has made contact with practically every station in the area of Northern British Columbia and Alberta, and has even had "skeds" (schedule calls) with Maitland Point in the Western Arctic and with Cumberland House, Saskatchewan.

Several tons of garden produce were shipped from the vicinity of Kitwanga on the Skeena River, despite frost in late August which made the growing season one of the shortest in several years. Tourists who visited Stewart River post in the Yukon during July expressed surprise at the size of blooms in the flower garden and at the rapidity of growth in the vegetable section; the latitude is approximately 63° North.

Good catches of trout and salmon rewarded fishers on the Babine River in August, and attracted Indians who repaired to the vicinity to put up salmon for their winter stores. Later, coyotes and foxes were seen moving toward the river and lake to feed on the thousands of dead fish lying on the shores around the spawning areas.

The salmon run was plentiful at Port Simpson, and Skeena River natives who made the annual trek to the coast to partake in the commercial catch were not disappointed.

The extension of the Government road north from Fort St. James has been completed to Manson Creek. Work was continued on the road under construction from Dease Lake to the gold mining area of Boulder Creek, where placer operations have shown favourable results.

C.N. Stephen

Garden at Fort Good Hope, just below the Arctic Circle, 1939.

Saskatchewan District

A fairly extensive building programme is being conducted at several posts. Berens River has now a new 120-foot dock, a modern residence, new warehouse, and the store is being remodelled. A new combined store and warehouse is at present under construction at Beauval and a large warehouse is being built at Ile a la Crosse.

The district will shortly extend its radio communications, as transmitting and receiving sets have recently been forwarded to Island Lake, Cumberland House and Lac du Brochet.

Winter set in early this year and reports of crossing Little Playgreen Lake on ice from Rossville to Norway House on October 14 were received.

The Selkirk Navigation Company experienced considerable difficulty in delivering winter supplies for our posts at the north end of Lake Winnipeg, owing to the exceptionally early freeze-up. Practically all Norway House freight was delivered but a load of supplies en route to Rossville had to be returned to Warrens Landing when ice cut through the bow of the barge, necessitating its being beached in shallow water. Some damage to freight by water resulted but this was not serious.

The Prince Albert-Lac la Ronge highway has now been completed as far as the north end of Montreal Lake, and there appears every possibility of its terminal being reached during 1940. The completion of this road will revolutionize transport work in this part of the country and we look forward to a general development of mining and other activities.

Nelson River District

District Manager W. E. Brown left Winnipeg on 23rd June on his summer inspection itinerary, which will extend into late September, and will include Pukatawagan, Nelson House and Nueltin Lake as well as all posts on the south and west coasts of Hudson Bay.

The schooner, M.S. *Fort Severn*, was launched, outfitted and loaded according to schedule, but owing to exceptionally bad ice conditions she was unable to leave the harbour until 6th July, three days behind schedule. On 13th July she was still ice-bound seventy miles south of Cape Churchill, en route to York Factory.

Our hearty congratulations to the proud parents on the occasion of blessed events this spring: to Mr. and Mrs. T. Crawford at Repulse Bay, a daughter at Easter time; to Mr. and Mrs. G. Anderson at Tavane, a daughter on 13th April, born at Chesterfield hospital; to Mr. and Mrs. T. Batchelor at Big Beaver House, a son on 4th May.

It is with deep regret that we have to record the passing of T. C. Moore on September 23. Surviving him are his wife and nine children, and to these goes the sincere sympathy of Tommy's many friends in the Fur Trade.

T. C. Moore joined the Company at the age of fifteen years, in June, 1903, at Moose Factory, where he spent his first three years as an apprentice in boat-building. After completion of his apprenticeship he was appointed boat builder, which position he held for fifteeen years. His long service at Moose Factory was rounded out by his promotion to the superintendency of that time-honoured institution, Moose Works, in a branch of which his father had been employed for many years and his grandfather before him. After holding this position for eight years, Tommy was transferred to Churchill, where he spent the next two years again employed at his old trade. In December 1931, he was given charge of Churchill post and was promoted to the charge of York Factory the following year. He remained in charge of that post until ill health forced him to retire from active business life, in January 1938. It is perhaps fitting that Tommy should have spent his last years in service at a post such as York Factory, the one-time fur capital of central Canada. Belonging to a family that has served the Company for three generations, his whole life had been devoted to that service, and to the carrying on of the old fur trade traditions.

A new dwelling was built at Tavane post this summer, under the active supervision of Post Manager G. Anderson. While not a carpenter by profession, his many years experience in the northern fur trade enabled him to do a very creditable building job, with the result that Tavane now has one of the most comfortable dwellings in the west coast region.

David Drysdale ("Davie" to his many friends in the North) has been promoted to the charge of Padley post, relieving P. Dalrymple transferred to the charge of Baker Lake post. It is hoped that Davie has been too busy at his new duties to do much practising on his bagpipes, as it is rumoured amongst the Eskimos that his rendition of "The Campbells are Coming" is the reason for the comparative failure of the caribou migration.

James Bay District

As a result of the recent open season for beaver in Ontario, catches from various points in the province would indicate that these animals have not multiplied as much as anticipated.

The James Bay Inn at Moosonee, Ontario, a favorite spot for tourists, was unfortunately destroyed by fire last April. It is

very unlikely that it will be rebuilt.

We still continue to receive reports of hardship among the Indians in the James Bay area, but at many points rabbits are now beginning to show up in increasing numbers, which will ease the country food problem considerably.

A number of Indians from Gull Bay reserve, at Nipigon House, were taken into Port Arthur to attend the celebrations in honour of Their Majesties. These natives participated in the dancing ceremonies during Their Majesties' visit at the Indian village, which was erected on the banks of the McIntyre River, near the boundary of Fort William and Port Arthur. Chief Charlie Wigwas had the great honour of shaking hands with His Majesty. Chief Wigwas remarked that His Majesty was "just like one of us."

St. Lawrence District

H. T. F. Petterson, La Sarre post manager, recently obtained from a local settler a stone tool in very good condition which Diamond Jenness, Chief of the Division of Anthropology at Ottawa, reports to be a very fine specimen of a combination adze and gouge, fashioned by some Algonquian Indian, presumably in pre-European times.

The first steamer from Quebec to reach Blanc Sablon was the S.S. *Sable I.* which arrived on 22nd June. Heavy ice remained longer than usual in the Blanc Sablon vicinity, with the unfortunate result that the spring seal fisheries could not be put out. Early indications, however, point to a good cod fishery, which it is hoped will compensate for the scarcity of sealskins and oil.

The late spring also retarded the arrival of Indians from interior points and many of the natives did not reach trading posts until well through the month of July. The hunt has proved slightly better than a year ago at a number of points although fur bearers on the whole continue to be scarce.

The long list of brides from overseas headed northward has recently been added to by the arrival of Miss J. W. Stephen of Edinburgh, who passed through Montreal en route to Eskimo Point, where she will marry P. Dalrymple. Congratulations and best wishes to both.

As we write, air service to interior points in the district has just ended until after freeze-up. The summer season has been mainly uneventful, practically all flights having been completed in the usual way, without incident. On the north shore of the Gulf, however, much unfavourable weather was experienced throughout the season, resulting in one aeroplane being missing for several months. When finally located the machine was found intact, but the pilot and a wireless operator had died.

Blanc Sablon has had a successful cod fishery this season, our total collection being the largest for some time. The first consignment has been shipped by the S. S. *Fernfield* to Halifax and the remainder will be moved in early November.

Partridge has been reported quite plentiful in most localities and, as the season was opened by the provincial game authorities for one month, large numbers of hunters were out. Rabbits also show signs of coming back, which will be gratifying to the Indian population.

Royal visit to the Nipigon Post, 23 May 1939.

The Vicomte de Poncins, who spent the past seventeen months in the Western Arctic district, paid us a visit during the first week of November, when he related several interesting experiences encountered during his travels. He is returning to France, where he will rejoin the French army.

The new electric light project undertaken by the municipality of Senneterre appears to be making good progress. The Diesel engine and other machinery is now being installed and many buildings and dwelling houses are being wired in readiness for the time when the "juice" will be turned on.

A serious outbreak of measles occurred at Mistassinny and Chibougamau during the late summer among the Indians, necessitating the services of a doctor. Although prompt action was taken some of the younger children died from the disease.

On October 19 at 7 a.m. an earthquake was experienced in Montreal, lasting some seconds, being followed by an exceptionally long and loud thunder clap. Several posts also reported the earthquake, which shook buildings, but no damage was reported, except at Bersimis, where it was found the cement foundations had cracked.

Labrador District

The district manager [S.H. Parsons] sailed for Labrador on 1st June, taking passage by the *Fort Garry*. In addition to inspection of Labrador posts he will also spend some time in Ungava Bay this summer, returning to St. John's around 1st October.

Owing to extremely bad weather and ice conditions on the Labrador coast this summer, the *Fort Garry* is approximately two weeks behind her schedule but with the advent of better weather it as hoped to catch up on some of the lost time.

When taking down the manager's dwelling house at North West River this spring, a carved piece of wood was found under the door-step bearing the following: "This house was built by Edward Wishart, Joiner, of Stromness in the Orkneys, Scotland."

J. E. Keats, manager of North West River, reports the following curious coincidence:

"Whilst we were eating supper at about 6.15 p.m. Newfoundland time and listening in to the English news broadcast, the commentator stated that a Russian plane was flying non-stop from Moscow to New York and was then nearing the Labrador coast, and immediately after he spoke the roar of a plane's engines was heard, flying directly over the post, but as visibility was poor we did not get a good view of it, and it was with regret that we heard next morning that it had fallen near Prince Edward Island, although fortunately the aviators came out of it alive."

Lorene Squire

The "Nascopie"

The *Nascopie* sailed from Cardiff, Wales, on the 17th June for Montreal, after having had repairs completed at Falmouth. The ship docked in Montreal on 28th June, and loading of supplies commenced immediately. The morning of July 8, the date of sailing from Montreal, was extremely warm, but in spite of it, the Governor, Mrs. Cooper and the Misses Cooper, the Fur Trade Commissioner, practically all the Montreal Office staff and a large number of former passengers and friends were down at the dock to wish Captain Smellie and the ship's company God-speed and a safe return.

The Government's Eastern Arctic Patrol is again being accommodated on the *Nascopie*, under the able command of Major D. L. McKeand. There are twenty-one in the party this year.

Tourists embarking on the *Nascopie* at Montreal were: Mr. and Mrs. Louis R. Wallace, Santa Fe, Dr. E. C. Boyer and son, Johnstown, Pa., Mr. and Mrs. A. C. Nelson, Clearfield, Pa., Miss Dorothy E. Cleveland, Toronto, Miss L. J. Cameron, Fort William, Miss M. Oldenburg, Minneapolis, Messrs. C. A. Claflin, Boston, G. Schaff, Buffalo, N.Y.

* * *

This is written from the *Nascopie* as we approach Churchill. The voyage has been quite unusual so far for the amount of foggy, rainy and disagreeable weather coupled with exceptionally heavy ice conditions which delayed us. This necessitated cutting short the stop-overs at ports of call so that season 1939 has been a rush at the posts where we stopped.

The main police detachment will join us at Churchill, but we had with us from Montreal Corporal W. C. Dodsworth and Constable W. E. Hastie who are making the round trip.

The Hudson's Bay staff, in addition to J. W. Anderson and district accountant O. M. Demment, included J. A. Thom, R. Cruickshank, P. A. C. Nichols, apprentices Buhr and May and carpenter G. T. Moore from Moose Factory. Mrs. Gordon Webster, with her baby son, returns north to join her husband at Cape Smith while J. J. Bildfell goes to Cape Dorset to investigate the possibilities of the eiderdown industry.

Hebron was the first port of call and here we were welcomed by the Eskimo brass band under the direction of Rev. George Harp. At Port Burwell we took on board post managers J. M. Stanners and E. H. Riddell.

Fog and ice delayed us to a considerable extent between Port Burwell and Lake Harbour where, as usual, we were piloted in by Navolia. Here we found all well after a poor trade winter. Post Manager P. A. C. Nichols, bound for Frobisher Bay, left us here as likewise Apprentice Buhr who will be assistant to J. Bell for the winter. Messrs. Dunbar and Oughton of the Eastern Arctic Patrol remained at Lake Harbour until the second call of the *Nascopie*, to conduct their scientific investigations.

Crossing Hudson Straits through fog and ice, we reached Stupart's Bay post on the 24th July to find Post Manager M. L. Manning in good health and spirits.

A short run, again through fog and ice, brought us to Sugluk West. Leaving Sugluk West on the evening of 26th July we ran into our first rough weather of the voyage, but this did not last long as ice was encountered and this, accompanied by the inevitable fog, caused further delays before we reached Cape Dorset on the evening of the 27th. Here we took on board the Honourable John Buchan who had been assistant at Cape Dorset post during the past winter with Post Manager Chesley Russell. Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Manning, of the British-Canadian Arctic Expedition, were not on hand for ship-time at Cape Dorset but are reported "all well" on the west coast of Baffin Island.

The run from Wolstenholme to Southampton Island was the first fine weather we had experienced for some time and as this continued during the day we were there, a picnic expedition was organized for the passengers led by Post Manager L. A. Hodgson. All who participated spent a very enjoyable day on Southampton Island. We sailed away from this post on the 31st July.

At Cape Smith Mrs. Webster and her baby son left us and Interpreter Abraham Broomfield came on board for transfer to Port Harrison. Carpenter G. T. Moore also went ashore at Cape Smith to start work immediately on the new store before going south later in the season to build a new dwelling at Port Harrison [...] where we arrived on the evening of the second August. Passengers leaving us at Port Harrison were Post Managers E. H. Riddell en route for Belcher Islands in James Bay, Apprentice May and Interpreter Broomfield for Port Harrison, and Operator J. Beaudereau for the radio station VAL. Rev. H. A. and Mrs. Turner and their daughter joined us for Churchill as likewise Apprentice J. W. Bruce and Operator Bell of the radio station. On Thursday the third of August Captain Smellie took the passengers on a fishing expedition and in the afternoon Eskimo sports were held.

We sailed from Port Harrison 6 a.m. Friday the fourth of August but had not gone very far in the direction of Churchill when we encountered our old enemies, fog and ice. We were held in the ice during the night of the 5th of August but were under way again at daybreak. About 5 a.m. great excitement was caused by the appearance of three polar bears quite close to the ship.

As the ship did not bunker at Churchill, a stay of only one day was necessary, during which time the vice-regal party inspected the *Nascopie*. The Governor-General and Lady Tweedsmuir, it will be recalled, had travelled to Churchill to meet their son, Hon. John Buchan, who came out to civilization from Cape Dorset post.

Members of the staff leaving the *Nascopie* at Churchill were J. M. Stanners for Igloolik, and Messrs. Swaffield, Hodgson, and Bruce for Montreal. District Manager W. E. Brown travelled on the *Nascopie* from Churchill to

Lorene Squire

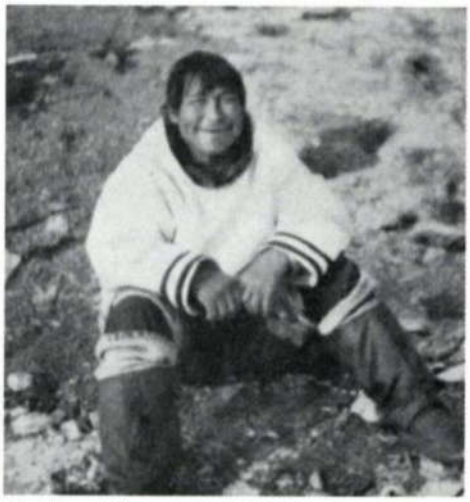
L.A. Learmonth.

Lorene Squire

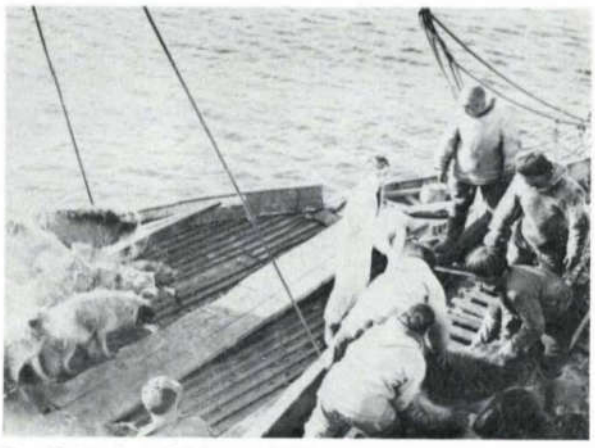
Waiting for the "Nascopie", Pond's Inlet, 1938.

Lorene Squire

Loading fur bales for transfer to the "Nascopie", Arctic Bay.



Navolia, well-known pilot of Lake Harbour.



George Horner Collection

Transferring Inuit sled dogs to the "Nascopie".

Baptism of Evelyn Scott, the "Arctic Bay Baby". Left to right: Canon Turner, Alan Scott, Nora West (with baby), Eileen Scott, Captain Smellie.

Lorene Squire

The captain's table on the "Nascopie", 1938. Left to right: J.W. Anderson, manager Ungava District; Bishop Clabaut; Ralph Parsons, Fur Trade Commissioner; Captain Smellie; Major D. L. McKeand; Supt. T. B. Caulkin, R.C.M.P.; W. E. Brown, manager Nelson River District.

Chesterfield. At Chesterfield we met the M. S. *Fort Severn* (Captain Isaac Barbour, master), and after taking her cargo from the *Nascopie*, she sailed on the 11th for Baker Lake.

After a fine run from Chesterfield Inlet, the *Nascopie* anchored at Wolstenholme, and by an unusual coincidence the Fur Trade Commissioner was able to inspect Wolstenholme post exactly thirty years to a day from the date he established it, August 13, 1909.

Lake Harbour was reached on August 15, where the Eskimo sports prevented by bad weather on the first call were conducted with the Commissioner in attendance. Here we were met by Post Manager Russell and J. J. Bildfell from Cape Dorset, bringing some twenty-five Eskimo dogs to be transferred to Fort Ross, where practically all teams had been wiped out by an epidemic. On the evening of the 15th, we had our first intimation that our new Private Commercial radio station, VY2K, at Frobisher Bay was on the air. Not only this, but the twelve-volt wind-charger is supplying electric light for the manager's residence. This is a very creditable installation for which Post Manager P. A. C. Nichols is to be congratulated.

We anchored at Port Burwell on August 16, to find the Labrador District supply schooner *Fort Garry* and the Commissioner's inspection boat *Fort Amadjuak* in port. We took on board Apprentice A. Stevenson for Arctic Bay and sailed away from Port Burwell the same evening heading north for Craig Harbour.

Craig Harbour, which was reached on the 22nd, certainly presented a wintry and Arctic appearance, for the harbour was packed full of ice and the surrounding hills were covered with new snow — a bleak and forbidding prospect. Lance-Corporal Hamilton and Constable Fyfe, with their two Greenland Eskimo servants, had difficulty in getting out to the ship over the broken ice of the harbour, but eventually got aboard in time for breakfast. The Eskimos went ashore over the ice the same evening, but it was impossible to land cargo all day on the 22nd until about 5 p.m. on the 23rd, when Inspector Martin accompanied by members of the R. C. M. P., was able to get ashore in the opening ice-pack. The cargo boats were unloaded and the two scow loads of freight went ashore in the opening ice. Fortunate it was that the cargo to be handled was small, for no sooner was it landed than the ice closed in again and it was with difficulty that the second and final scow was brought on board the ship. During the short interval of clear ice, Inspector Martin was ashore on his inspection work, and the passengers were given the opportunity to visit the R. C. M. P. detachment at Craig Harbour and to set foot on Ellesmere Island, our most northerly port of call.

From about four to five on the afternoon of Monday, the 21st, while we were approaching Craig Harbour, a very interesting and picturesque ceremony took place whereby those who had not already crossed the Arctic Circle were initiated into the "Order of the Arctic Circle" with due pomp and ceremony. Dr. R. L. Sutton took the part of King Boreas, while Mrs. Tallman was Queen Aurora.

We left Craig Harbour in fine weather, which unfortunately did not last very long. By noon of the 24th, we were in a blinding snowstorm, followed in the evening by a rising wind which reached gale force during the night, so that the 25th was spent in riding out a gale of north wind. It was a miserable, cold day, quite a blizzard in fact, and although our good ship *Nascopie* rode the gale very well, it was too rough to do any kind of work. Very few of the passengers were moving about and our canine passengers had rather a dog's life of it.

On the 27th August, we were working through ice down into Prince Regent Inlet, finally becoming stuck in quite heavy icefields at 2 p.m. The wind had been rising throughout the day and by evening had developed into a regular blizzard, the snowdrifts piled on deck. Fortunately, the ship was perfectly quiet in the ice, but we woke up on the morning of the 28th to behold a very wintry scene. A great amount of snow was piled on the decks, the hot and cold water system of the ship was frozen, and all the donkey engines had to be kept slowly turning over to prevent freezing. Truly it was a bleak Arctic outlook, and our passengers could have no mistake as to where they were, certainly "somewhere in the Arctic." We were able to be under way again on the afternoon of the 28th and passed through with difficulty some of the heaviest ice of the voyage, to anchor off Brentford Bay in the evening in thick weather and with much ice about. It was blowing a gale again on the morning of the 29th, but we were under way early and at 8 a.m. anchored off Long Island at the mouth of Bellot Strait, about three miles from Fort Ross post. The post could be seen through the blizzard looking bleak and wintry with much new snow all around. In a moderating wind we were able to get under way and in the afternoon to anchor in Depot Bay, off the post, where we were greeted by Post Manager L. A. Learmonth and Apprentice M. G. Ahlbaum. The *Aklavik*, with Patsy Klengenberg, had left for King William Land earlier in the month, and also the M. B. *Seal*, with Interpreter E. W. Lyall in charge, had left at the same time to bring back Post Manager William Gibson, who took charge of Fort Ross in succession to Mr. Learmonth. The latter plans to undertake some scientific work for the Royal Ontario Museum before coming out to civilization in 1940.

The ice had opened up to some extent, so that we did not have so much difficulty in sailing out from Fort Ross through Prince Regent Inlet, but were again delayed by the inevitable fog and thick weather.

We reached Arctic Bay on September 3, and on the 4th, at 10 a.m., a very interesting baptismal service took place when the infant daughter of Post Manager and Mrs. A. R. Scott was

baptized Evelyn Pace by the Rev. Canon J. H. Turner. The godparents were Miss Nora West, *Nascopie* passenger en route for the Anglican mission at Pangnirtung, and District Manager J. W. Anderson, who, after giving the bride in marriage at Arctic Bay on August 29, 1938, had the honour of being the godfather. Numerous gifts were bestowed on the baby, including those from Her Excellency Lady Tweedsmuir and from Mrs. P. Ashley Cooper, wife of our Governor. The Arctic Bay baby was named Evelyn Pace in honour of the Ungava District stenographer [who was a friend of Mrs. Scott].

We sailed away from Arctic Bay leaving Apprentice Stevenson to be assistant to Post Manager Scott for the coming winter, while Interpreter W. J. G. Ford joined the *Nascopie* for parts south. After a fine run we arrived at Pond's Inlet on September 5. Interpreter J. R. Ford joined the ship for parts south, leaving Post Manager A. Smith alone for the winter. Another passenger to join us at Pond's was P. D. Baird, explorer and scientist and a former member of the British Canadian Arctic Expedition, who also travelled to Halifax.

As there was little cargo to handle, we had but a short stay at Clyde River post, where S. G. Ford remains in charge, and we took on board H. T. Ford, former post manager.

We left Clyde in fine weather and had a nice run through numerous large and impressive icebergs, but were delayed on the 10th by fog and did not reach Pangnirtung until the afternoon of the 12th. We enjoyed fine weather in our two days' stay at Pangnirtung, which greatly facilitated the work of cargo handling and enabled the passengers to make excursions on shore and to enjoy a boat trip up the fjord. The big event at Pangnirtung, however, was the trial of Eskimo Katchoo, on a charge of manslaughter. The trial was conducted by Stipendiary Magistrate D. L. McKeand, with J. A. McLean, council for the Crown, and F. G. Whitaker, council for the defence. Court stenographer was Mrs. Dr. T. J. Orford; court officer, Corporal W.C. Dodsworth; interpreter, H. T. Ford. A plea of insanity was entered by F. G. Whitaker, and evidence as to the sanity of the accused was given by Dr. T. Melling, late of Chesterfield; Dr. R. L. Sutton, Kansas City, Mo.; and Dr. D. Forward, Ashtabula, Ohio. The jury consisted of D. A. Nichols, R. A. Perkins, W. G. J. Ford, J. R. Ford, P. D. Baird, and J. G. Cormack. The jury gave a unanimous verdict of insanity, and the accused was sentenced to be confined in a mental hospital awaiting the pleasure of the minister of the Northwest Territories.

We sailed away from Pangnirtung, taking aboard Miss Flossie Hirst from St. Luke's Hospital, who goes out on furlough, and also the Eskimo prisoner, Katchoo, for Halifax.

On Sunday, the 17th we were hove to in a gale in thick weather off Hebron, but were able to enter the harbour in clearing weather the next day. Here the cargo boats were stored for the winter and H. T. Ford left us to spend the winter at Nutak, while we were joined by Post Manager F. R. Hynes, going out on Furlough.

After leaving Hebron, there were increasing evidences that a state of war existed; all portholes were blackened, lifeboats were provisioned and swung out, and during the night the ship presented a black and deserted appearance. On Saturday, the 23rd September, 1939, we picked up our pilot at 3:20 in the afternoon and, after a wartime examination by a naval patrol boat, finally docked at Halifax at 5 p.m. Thus ended the two hundred and seventieth voyage "trading into Hudson's Bay."

Postscript

News from the Fur Trade Department was transferred from *The Beaver* to a new staff magazine, *The Moccasin Telegraph*, in 1941.

With the onset of the Second World War, many employees at the Northern posts served as meteorological observers, and were also part of the Aircraft Detection Corps. The transport division and radio network also played an important role in defence measures.

Twelve of the London, England, staff were killed in the war. Of the 962 Canadian HBC staff who joined the services, 41 were killed. Thirty were decorated, including pilot Paul Davoud (D.F.C., D.S.O., O.B.E.) and Jock Runcie (Military Cross). After the war 507 of the former employees returned to the HBC.

Ralph Parsons, last of the Fur Trade Commissioners, retired in 1940 after 40 years service; J.W. Anderson, manager of the Ungava District, retired in 1958 and published his memoirs in 1961; W.E. Brown, manager of the Nelson River District, was awarded the Order of Canada in 1987 for his pioneering work in Arctic transportation and communication; renowned fur trader L.A. Learmonth retired in 1957; William "Paddy" Gibson F.R.G.S., died in an airplane fire in 1942; Lorene Squire, the gifted young photographer who contributed so many photographs to *The Beaver* in the 1930s, (and to this article) was killed in a car accident in 1942.

Captain T.F. Smellie, O.B.E., retired in 1945 after 29 years with the HBC, mainly on the *Nascopie*. Two years later *The Beaver* reported the sinking of the "gallant old ship" after she struck an uncharted reef off Cape Dorset.

The names of many of the Northern posts have recently been changed back to traditional Inuit names, *e.g.* Frobisher Bay is now Iqaluit.

The Fur Trade Department was renamed the Northern Stores Department in 1959, and was sold by the HBC in 1987 to a company now called the North West Company, which still operates a number of the former Bay stores in the North and makes its headquarters in the former Hudson's Bay House in Winnipeg. ◆

King George VI inspects the night-fighter squadron commanded by Paul Davoud (to left of the king), former HBC air transport manager, ca. 1942.

THE GREAT SAXBY GALE OF OCTOBER 1869

BY JAMES M. WHALEN

One would almost believe that a monsoon of the Indian Ocean, a tornado of the coast of Guinea and a West India hurricane had all agreed to set in unison and come down upon our Bay of Fundy.

So wrote an Eastport, Maine correspondent to the *Saint Croix Courier*, published in St. Stephen, New Brunswick, immediately after the great Saxby Gale of October 1869.

The legendary Saxby Gale — one of the fiercest and most destructive storms ever to hit the Bay of Fundy coast — took at least 71 lives, mostly by drowning, and caused severe property damage in Atlantic Canada and the Eastern United States.

The gale was so-named because in December 1868 Lieutenant S.M. Saxby, Royal Navy, a naval engineering instructor, wrote to a British newspaper, the *London Standard*, predicting a storm of great severity accompanied by exceptionally high tides. Saxby wrote in part:

> I now beg leave to state, with regard to 1869 at seven a.m., on October 5th, the moon will be at that part of her orbit which is nearest the earth. Her attraction will, therefore, be at its maximum force. At noon of the same day, the moon will be on the earth's equator, a circumstance which never occurs without marked atmospheric disturbance.

Lieutenant Saxby went on to say that at two P.M. of the same day, lines drawn from the earth's centre would cut the sun and the moon in the same arc of right ascension, or in other words "the new moon will be in the earth's equator when in perigee, and nothing more threatening can, I say, occur."

After warning of what might happen when the moon was in perigee (the point which is nearest the earth), Saxby added:

> In the meantime there will be time for the repair of unsafe seawalls, and for the circulation of this notice, by means of your far-reaching voice throughout the world.

Nine months later, on 16 September 1869, Saxby's second warning appeared in the *London Standard*. Due to the slowness of transatlantic communications, Maritime newspapers did not reprint the warning until two days before the storm came.

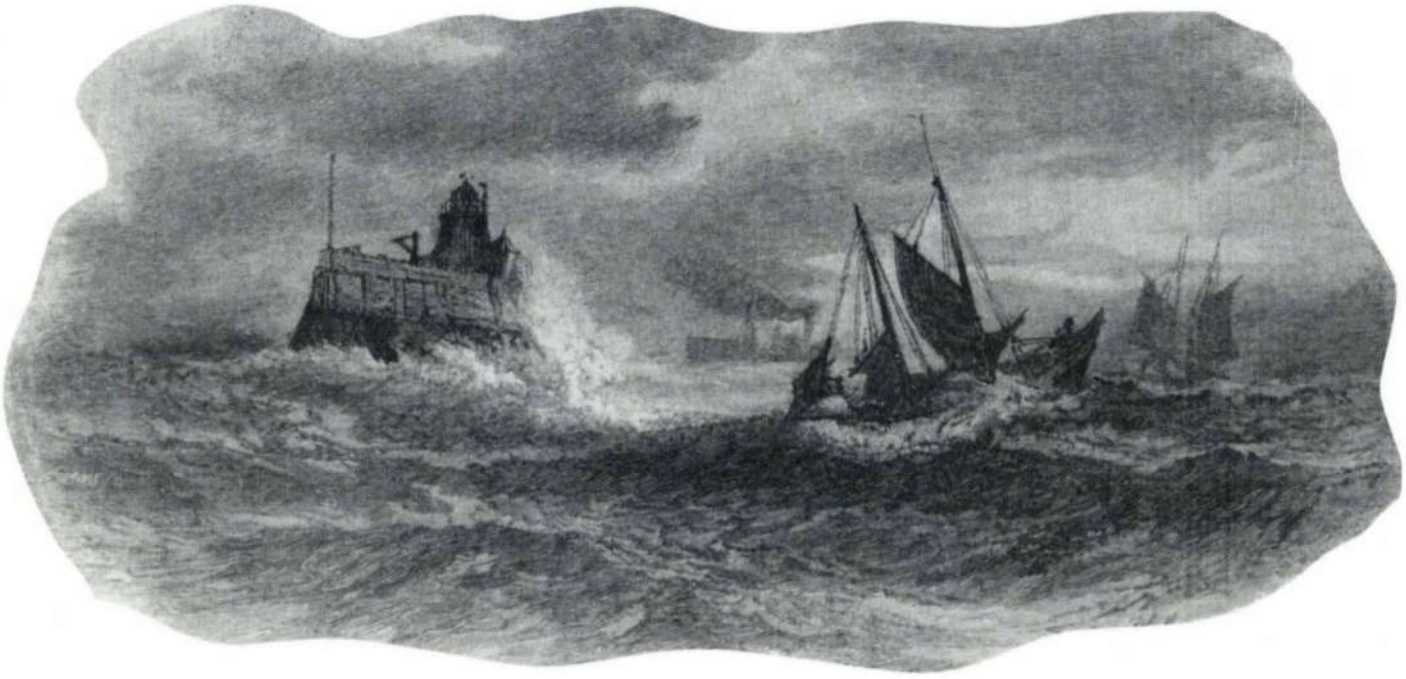
Frederick Allison, a Halifax meteorologist, also predicted a "heavy gale" for the 4-5 October 1869 which the *Morning Chronicle* of 2 October 1869 published along with Saxby's warning. Consequently, some people in Halifax prepared for the worst, but the city escaped with nothing more than a stiff breeze.

Meanwhile, in Saint John, the *Daily Telegraph* of 2 October 1869 likewise published Saxby's warning. Some people there paid attention to it and cleared goods off wharves and the lower floors of buildings, but other parts of the Maritimes largely ignored the warning.

According to local weather reports, 4 October 1869 began as a foggy day at Saint John, but the fog lifted as the morning progressed. By afternoon, it became hot and breezy with the temperature at 70 degrees Fahrenheit — well above seasonal average. At 5:00 P.M. the wind

Unprecedented tides on the Bay of Fundy left a trail of ruin and death

"The terrified keeper sought refuge in the lantern at the top of the tower..."



BEACON LIGHT, SAINT JOHN AT HIGH TIDE, from "Picturesque Canada", 1882.

picked up until it reached gale force and it started to rain hard.

James Earle, keeper of the Beacon Light in Saint John harbour, uneasily watched the approach of the ominous weather. About 6:00 P.M. with the sky darkening and the wind increasing, Mr. Earle got in his boat and headed for shore. He did not go far because dangerous sea conditions forced him to return to the shelter of the beacon tower.

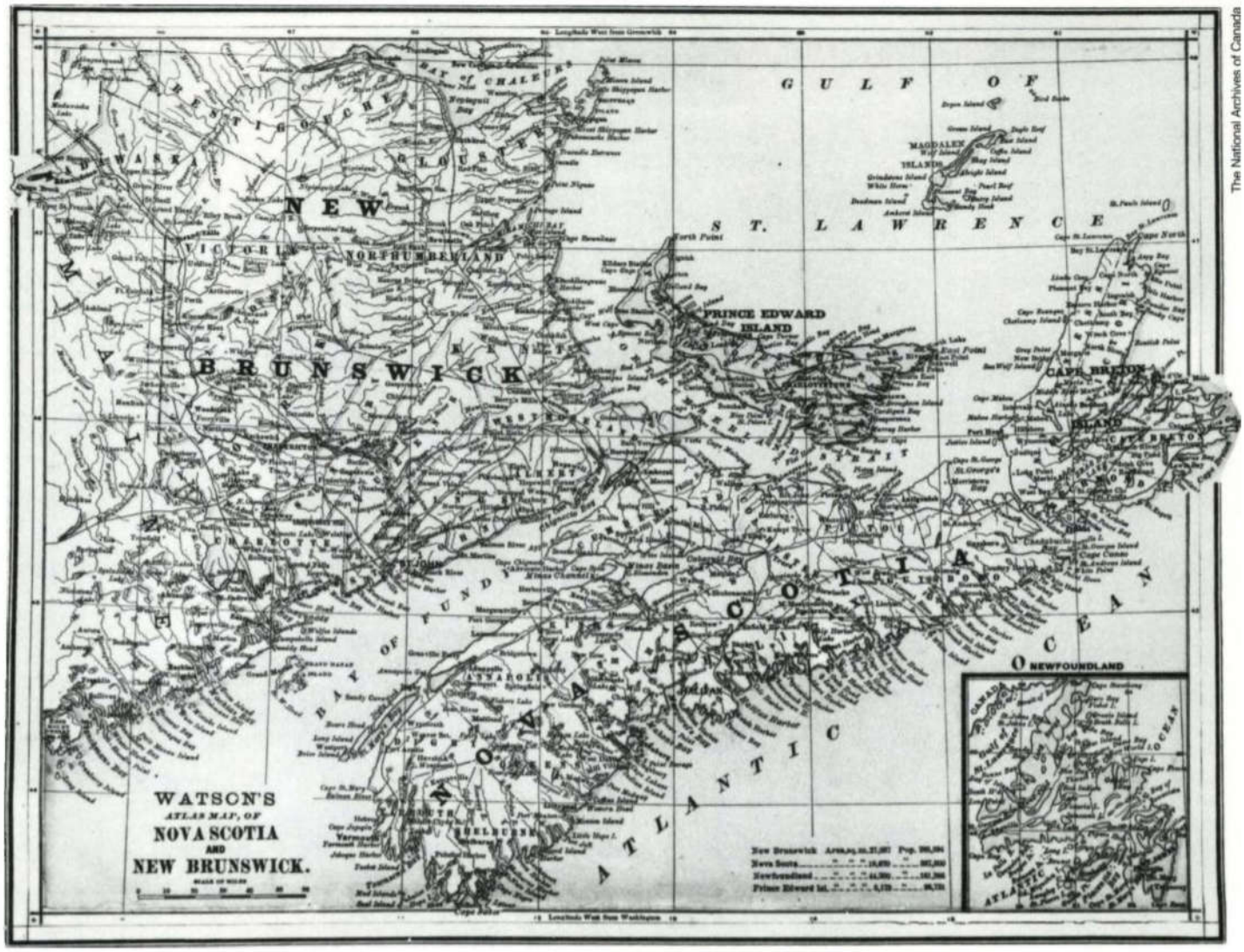
By 8:30 P.M. the gale was blowing south by east with terrific strength. It attained its maximum force around 9:00 P.M. when the rain almost stopped. At the same time, the tide was unusually high and came in early. In fact, as the storm swept up the Bay of Fundy, the tides — the highest in the world — were later estimated to have attained an unprecedented height.

In 1920, Dr. W. Bell Dawson, Superintendent of the Canadian Tidal Survey, confirmed that during the Saxby Gale: "the level of the water in Cumberland Basin was raised 6.2 feet above the normal height ... and in Cobequid Bay, in the other arm of the Bay of Fundy, it was raised nearly five feet."

Certainly, James Earle was aware of the extremely high tides at Saint John that night. He had just returned to the Beacon Light when wind-whipped waves began pounding on its walls. The federal Department of Marine later recorded:

> On that night the sea made a clean breach over it [the tower], cutting out the shingles and boards of the lower storey, and leaving the upper storey and lantern standing on the frame.

The water also washed away the rail, steps and boat and carried off much of the ballast. The terrified keeper



The National Archives of Canada

Watson's Atlas map of the Maritimes, 1885.

sought refuge in the lantern at the top of tower, where he remained until rescued the next day. A local newspaper describing Mr. Earle's ordeal said that the keeper's "faith in wooden lighthouses was completely shaken." This was evident as the Department of Marine reported that Mr. Earle "could not be induced to again assume his duties, and another [keeper] had to be engaged."

Miraculously, Mr. Earle did not lose his life, as did many others who felt the brunt of the storm that night. The high winds and tidal waves caused at least four shipwrecks along the Bay of Fundy coast of New Brunswick in which some twenty-six people drowned. The worst disaster occurred at New River, Charlotte County, to the barque *Genii,* a vessel of 380 tons gross, launched only three weeks earlier from a shipyard at St. Andrews. After taking on a load of lumber for England, the vessel sought refuge in the lee of a nearby breakwater where, presumably, it would be safe from the effects of the coming storm. But, this was not to be, and at the height of the gale the boat overturned, drowning all 11 men aboard.

Near Moncton, in eastern New Brunswick, another five people drowned in the fast-rising tidal waters including 16 year old Hildah Bray. She was suddenly swept away by a "wall of water" while crossing a bridge at Hillsborough in a horse-drawn buggy. Even more tragically, when flood waters engulfed Jacob O'Brien's home at Upper Coverdale, Mr. O'Brien, his wife and four boys tried to escape by crossing a river on a makeshift raft to Boundary Creek. Unfortunately, the raft split in mid-stream, and although the wind blew the frantic parents to safety on a nearby shore, none of their four children survived the crossing.

Added to the loss of human life in New Brunswick, an uncounted number of livestock drowned. Moreover, an unprecedented amount of property damage occurred

as the storm moved from the coastal areas into harbours and rivers and affected city and countryside alike. Reports of damage to forests as well as railways, ships, wharves, bridges, culverts, buildings and telegraph lines were widespread.

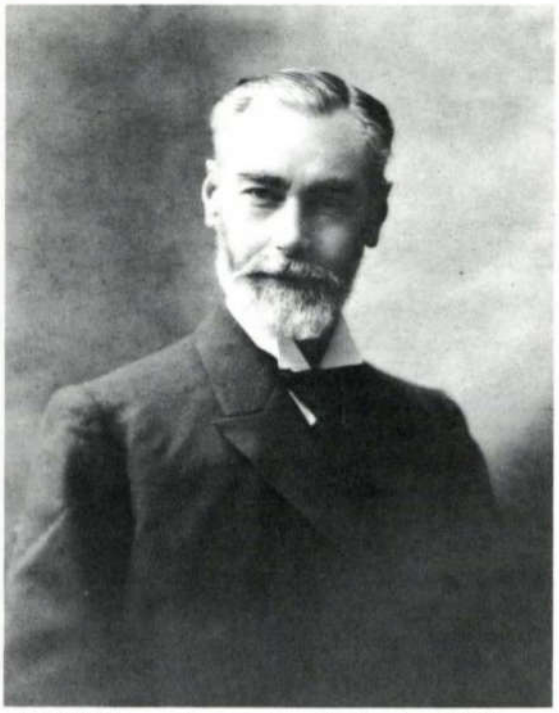
The storm hit Charlotte County, in southwestern New Brunswick, the hardest. Shipping interests and fishermen there suffered alike as vessels at anchor, wharves, fish sheds and weirs were damaged. In fact, the *St. Andrew's Standard* counted some 60 vessels driven ashore along its coastline and in the islands of the Bay of Fundy.

In Charlotte County, the impact of the storm was not only felt near the coast, but, due to the fierce gale, destruction occurred inland along the St. Croix River too. According to a local writer, Guy Murchie, more than 140 buildings were destroyed. Also, two bridges were washed out, hundreds of trees uprooted and several churches damaged.

At St. Stephen, the Episcopal church lost its steeple and the partially completed Methodist church was almost destroyed; at Milltown, the Universalist church was demolished; and at St. George, the Anglican rectory lost its roof.

Further up the Bay of Fundy, at Saint John, water spilled over the wharves, lifted the tops off several and completely destroyed others. All along the waterfront, warehouses flooded and the winds and waves caused vessels to break from their moorings. Some were driven ashore and lost parts of their rigging, sails or masts. Others were chaffed or otherwise harmed, and at least one was waterlogged. On the west side of the harbour, in Carleton and Sand Point, the storm badly wrecked wharves and breakwaters as well as fish sheds, weirs and houses.

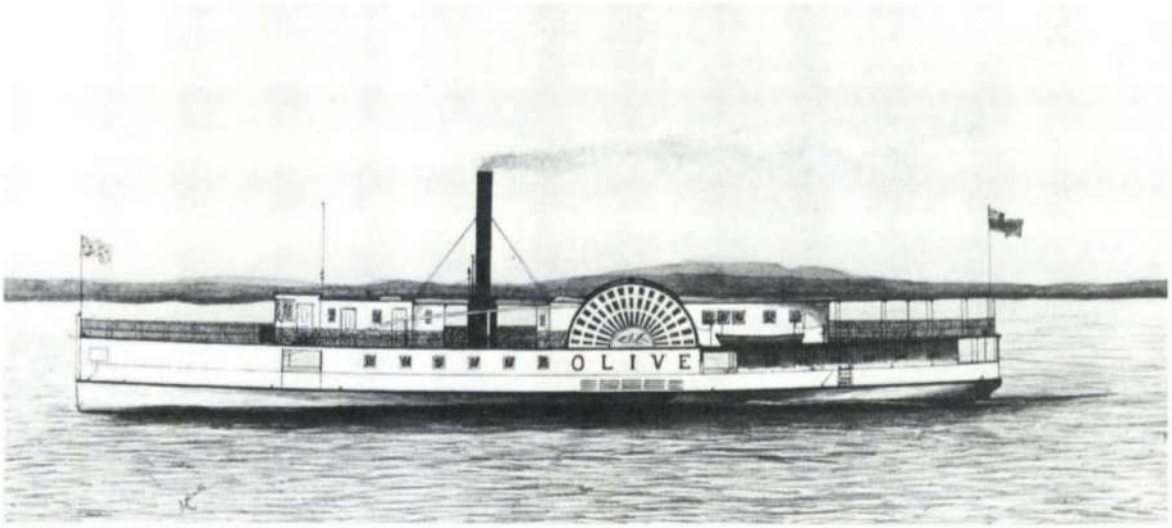
The unusually high tides forced the Saint John River to back up to such a degree that it rose about three feet and flooded parts of the city of Fredericton which also suffered severe wind damage.



The National Gallery of Canada

Dr. W. Bell Dawson, Superintendent of the Canadian Tidal Survey.

On the Saint John River below Fredericton, the passenger steamer *Olive* was blown ashore opposite Lower Gagetown. The storm blew down trees, fences, and levelled buildings all along the lower Saint John River Valley. Damage also occurred in Carleton County, on the



New Brunswick Museum, Donald Taylor Collection

On the Saint John River below Fredericton the steamer "Olive" was blown ashore during the Saxby Gale. The saloon was ripped off the vessel and carried overboard, but passengers suffered no serious injuries.

upper part of the river above Fredericton.

At Moncton, nearly a hundred miles east of Saint John, the water level reached the highest ever known. The city's main bridge over the Petitcodiac River was not only destroyed, but it drifted downstream taking out the railway bridge at Jonathan's Creek. In addition, the east end of the city was flooded, including several warehouses and residences.

In nearby Albert County, where the water level also was extremely high, four bridges went down in the storm and the water surged over the dikes along Shepody Bay causing much destruction. The impact of the storm extended right to northeastern New Brunswick. For example, in the Bay of Chaleur, the water was reported higher than normal and some flooding occurred at Dalhousie, about two hundred miles north of Moncton.

In Nova Scotia, the tide overflowed and severely damaged several dikes, especially those near Cumberland Basin and Minas Basin, flooding acres of marshland. On the Tantramar marshes, the tide carried two men to their deaths as they tried, along with two others, to secure a schooner at Fort Lawrence Creek.

All along the marshes, the wind and high water felled hay barns, scattered hay, swept fences away, and drowned hundreds of sheep and cattle. The storm also lifted rails and ties off the Windsor and Annapolis Railroad between Kentville and Horton, Nova Scotia, and washouts occurred on the Eastern Extension Railway near Dorchester, New Brunswick, as well.

Besides damaging the dikes, the storm caused flooding in several Nova Scotian communities near the Bay of Fundy coast from Yarmouth to Windsor. Strong winds blew 11 vessels ashore at Westport and near Weymouth, the Digby-Yarmouth stagecoach blew over leaving the passengers, 4 in number, badly shaken.

On 2 October 1869, two days before the storm reached Canada, it caused considerable damage in the eastern United States where at least 38 people died, nearly all by drowning: 15 in New York State, 5 in Pennsylvania, 2 in New Jersey and 16 in the New England States — 10 in Connecticut alone. Property losses were high as heavy rains caused rivers to overflow resulting in severe flooding. For a whole week, the *New York Times* carried descriptions of the storm as it moved northward into the mid-Atlantic states and New England, before coming up the Bay of Fundy on the evening of 4 October.

The news of the destruction in the various states and the lives lost came in slowly because of widespread damage to telegraph lines. "The Great Storm", as the *New York Times* called it, claimed several victims in the United States as rivers rose to unprecedented heights in several areas, sweeping away bridges, mills, dams and houses. At Broad Brook, Connecticut, for example, a family of seven, who lived below a tin shop, drowned when the whole structure was swept down a river.

Although the storm went down in Maritime history as the Saxby Gale, some experts claim that it was not a gale but a hurricane. In an article in the *Moncton Times*, on the 100th anniversary of the Saxby Gale, Professor Ronald Rees, a climatologist at the University of Saskatchewan, was quoted as follows: "It was a hurricane originating in the Caribbean ... the eye passed right over the Saint Croix River into central New Brunswick where it dissipated itself."

Even though the storm caused widespread destruction in the United States and took several lives, it was not recorded as a major weather occurrence there. As early as 1911, William F. Ganong, a New Brunswick scholar who taught at an American university, confirmed that it was not in any meteorological books on the United States and was unknown to the Weather Bureau in Washington, D.C.

Furthermore, Ganong did not think much of Saxby's prediction because the gale did not range over both hemispheres as Saxby predicted, but "was a local southwest gale". Ganong went on to say that "all considerations tend to show that its fulfillment has no causal basis whatever, and was nothing more than pure circumstance."

The *Saint John Morning Freeman* of 16 November 1869 concluded that the attractive power of the sun and moon did not cause the high tides in the Bay of Fundy as Saxby suggested, but they were due to "the force and direction of the wind aided by a low barometer."

Clearly, Saxby erred in his prediction, but the storm that is named after him was a real disaster causing great destruction and loss of human life. One hundred and twenty-five years later, Maritimers still refer to this legendary gale, especially when there is an unusual weather occurrence in the Bay of Fundy. The damage caused by the so-called "Ground Hog Day storm", of 2 February 1976, for example, provided an unwelcome opportunity for comparison to the Saxby Gale of 1869 — one of the most destructive storms ever to occur in the region.

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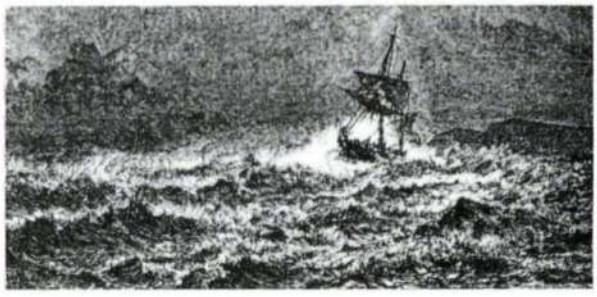
James M. Whalen, a native of New Brunswick, lives in Ottawa, Ontario.



A People in Transition

BY CLARENCE TILLENIUS

BETWEEN TWO CULTURES
A Photographer Among The Inuit

Photographs by Charles Gimpel. Introduction by Maria Tippett. Viking/Penguin, Toronto, 1994. 178 pp., illus. $50.00.

When the editor of *The Beaver* — because of my travels and sketching forays to the Arctic — entrusted me with the task of reviewing Maria Tippett's book on art dealer Charles Gimpel's life and experiences in the Arctic and elsewhere, a first look at his photographs surprised me with the realization that, though Gimpel and I never met in person, we both in the spring of 1964 and again in March/April 1968 had simultaneously been travelling in the Arctic, he at Cape Dorset on the coast of Baffin Island in the Eastern Arctic, I following the dog teams of polar bear hunters on Southampton Island in the Central Arctic.

Charles Gimpel was in so many ways an extraordinary phenomenon — a wealthy, cultured scion of an astute art dealer dynasty as much at home among the bored, affluent and titled European nobility and the rich parvenues and Johnny-come-latelys of the American and Canadian art scene, as travelling with his friends and trail companions, the Inuit, on Baffin Island and the Arctic vastnesses.

By way of introduction Tippett lets Charles Gimpel amusingly describe himself: "As for my brief biography, I am a Frenchman, married to a Canadian [Kay Moore] living in London. Third generation of art dealers. My brother and I have galleries in London and Zurich specializing in modern painting and sculpture. I have made several trips to the Canadian Eastern Arctic, taken many thousands of photographs up there and hope to have a country house in the near future on Baffin Island. I could perhaps call myself an amateur of the Arctic but the Eskimo seem to be more precise and have christened me *Oui Oui Ukjuq* — the French bearded seal."

Charles Gimpel

Gimpel's photographs speak for themselves, a remarkable series documenting the transition of a whole people to a way of life never of their own choosing, but made inevitable by the steady and inexorable infiltration of the alien white culture from "outside". Tippett presents in a most admirable way Charles Gimpel's travels in the Arctic, his analysis of the Inuit art scene and its relevance for the outside world. She does not flinch from acid comment on other aspects of the arctic scene she finds less admirable.

A number of such sharp and well-deserved critical comments enliven her text, which seldom strays far from her aim of achieving a well-rounded evocation of the impact of Gimpel on the Arctic and in turn its effect on him. Certainly the book is admirable in many ways; well documented, attractively designed and printed.

What is inexplicable and saddening is that apparently to enhance Gimpel's reputation and prestige she launches a disparaging and ill-informed criticism of the work of several arctic travellers and photographers whose experiences and familiarity with the harshness of life in the Arctic far surpass her own. As a consequence, she dismisses Gontran de Poncins (author of *Kabloona*); noted photographer of the Arctic and the South Seas Richard Harrington; and Robert Flaherty, producer of the famed 1922 epic film *Nanook of the North*. Here she betrays the curious myopia which sometimes seems to afflict observers from "outside" making judgements on the "Arctic Scene", having at best only a rudimentary acquaintance with its reality.

Contrast her praise of Inuit photographer Peter Pitseolak, ".. as Inummariit, or the one who understands the true Inuit ways, Pitseolak was the right person to do it" with her contemptuous disparagement of Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North*: "With a good deal of artistic license, romanticizing, and condescension Flaherty presented his hero as a 'Nobel [*sic*] Victim'. Nanook the hunter struggles to kill a walrus with a harpoon when rifles were the common weapon. He shivers in his snow-house because Flaherty had to remove its top in order to shoot the film sequence. Nanook wears polar bear skin pants which were not worn by the Inummariit in Northern Quebec where the film was made. And finally, he seems oblivious to the amenities

offered by the White Settlement of Port Harrison where the Inuit had long been trading their fox pelts for tobacco, enamel mugs, kettles, tea, flour, and sugar. By thus presenting Nanook as a victim of the harsh and intractable arctic climate, Flaherty rolled up all of the misguided cliches associated with the Inuit into the most fashionable medium of the day: the film."

Here follows Tippett's most astonishing statement: "... A sad indication of the extent to which myth can sometimes imitate real life came two years after *Nanook of the North* was released. Alakariallak, the Inummariit hunter from the Northern Ungava Peninsula who portrayed Nanook in the film, died of starvation while on a hunting trip. In the end Allarkariallak has become the 'Noble Victim' he had so successfully portrayed in the film."

What can Tippett mean by this passage? Can she intend to say the "harsh and intractable" life in the Arctic was no more than a figment of Flaherty's overactive imagination? Flaherty *knew* the Arctic: he had listened to the stories of the Eskimo elders: the episodes related in *Nanook* were precisely the life as the elders had lived it.

I myself, on a 1970 visit to the tiny trading post on Broughton Island (off the coast of Baffin Island), watched and listened to young Jonassie, the only survivor of a party of four whose igloo was engulfed by the sea off Baffin when the ice on which it rested split in the night. They all fell into the water. Jonassie and his father-in-law, having taken off their boots to get in their sleeping bag, ran barefoot, accompanied by the few dogs who did not drown, over the heaving ice floes to shore, and then got into the wet sleeping bag, the only thing rescued from the disaster. The other two men tried to make it on foot back to their village of Kivitoo (inland on Baffin Island), but were later found by searchers frozen to death, having failed to find the village. Jonassie's father-in-law died in the sleeping bag the second or third day and Jonassie, who had beaten the starving sled dogs off his father-in-law's body until his hands had frozen solid, woke from a coma to find the dogs had dragged the old man's dead body from the sleeping bag and were devouring it.

Jonassie said, waving the stumps of his hands where the gangrenous fingers had been amputated, and teetering on the remaining stumps of his frozen feet, "I could do nothing more: I covered my ears with my frozen hands so I would not hear the dogs gnawing on the old man's skull." *THAT* is the reality of the Arctic even today: no matter that one can buy transistor radios or TV cassettes in arctic trading posts. This is still a harsh and unforgiving land and the arctic traveller forgets that at his peril.

Yet setting aside these regrettable lapses, this is an important and valuable book. It records important information that time will inevitably obscure: and it sets forth unforgettably Charles Gimpel's vital role in the whole story of Inuit art.

Wildlife artist Clarence Tillenius travelled extensively in the Canadian Arctic in the 1960s and 1970s while working on projects for the National Museum, Ottawa. He lives in Winnipeg.

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THE BEAVER December/January

Meeting the U-Boat Challenge

By Gavin Murphy

THE U-BOAT HUNTERS
The Royal Canadian Navy and the Offensive Against Germany's Submarines

By Marc Milner. University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1994. 327 pp., illus. $35.00.

Marc Milner's book on the Royal Canadian Navy and the fight against the German U-boat menace during the Second World War examines Canada's participation in that great struggle, and also explains just how close we came to losing it.

Milner is a professor of history at the University of New Brunswick whose 1985 book *North Atlantic Run: The Royal Canadian Navy and the Battle for the Convoys* probes the RCN's contribution during the 1941-43 war years. He considers his latest book a natural extension of the earlier work as it covers the 1943-45 years. Milner suggests the offence against the U-boats was a qualified success. U-boats were defeated with skill and ingenuity, along with a dose of timing and good luck.

The author initially scrutinizes Canada's role in the pivotal sea battles of 1943 that secured the Atlantic Ocean for the Allies. During the second half of the year, as the tide turned against the U-boats, only one loss (shared with the Royal Navy) was recorded by the RCN out of a total of over 150 destroyed. This modest number is true, but a misleading indicator of Canada's contribution to the naval effort as Milner correctly points out.

The RCN's primary task by 1943 was to provide close escort protection for convoys sailing to Britain. Everyone from Churchill to Hitler to Mackenzie King knew that the war in Europe hinged on victory in the Atlantic. Half of all escorts that shepherded convoys across the Atlantic in 1943 were Canadian. Many merchant ships in these convoys were manned by Canadian crews. The Americans, and especially the British, equipped with superior anti-submarine weaponry and support from the air, took the offensive against the U-boats and chalked up the kills.

Germany could not recover from the losses at sea during 1943 and U-boats never again posed a serious threat to merchant shipping. The strategy in 1944 was to hunt down and destroy U-boats in preparation for the invasion of France. The RCN took on a more aggressive role and with improved submarine detection equipment, better-built ships and effective training, it recorded 15 U-boat kills. Another three were destroyed by the RCN in 1945 before V-E Day.

Milner's book records in exacting detail the race for supremacy at sea. He explains how the U-boat challenge was met through the development of anti-submarine weapons like the hedgehog and squid bombs, improved asdic (sonar) and radar equipment. Milner also describes how the Germans nearly regained ocean superiority in 1944-45 through the use of snorkel breathing tubes and the sophisticated type XXI U-boats. Much of this analysis is complex reading for the armchair historian, but his examination is crit-

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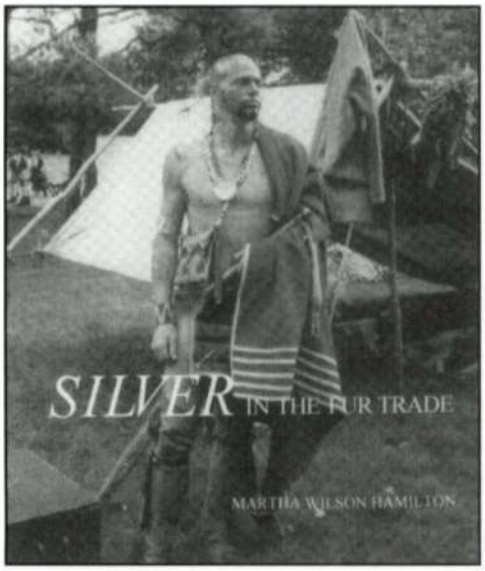

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ical to our understanding of the development of modern anti-submarine warfare.

The U-Boat Hunters is meticulously researched and it includes 30 pages of footnotes. Not surprisingly, as Milner is an academic, the majority of research was done with primary sources and there are few secondary works cited. The book features a wealth of excellent photographs, mainly selected from the collections of the Department of National Defence and the National Archives. The excellent reproduction on the front cover jacket of *Corvette Bridge*, a painting by Donald C. Mackay, deserves special mention.

Milner debunks any suggestion of a glorious naval victory over the U-boats and this conclusion may not sit well with many veterans. The fact remains that U-boats were a thorn in the side of the RCN until the end of the war and they often brought the battle to the home front. Just three weeks before final victory in Europe, the minesweeper *Esquimalt* was torpedoed by *U190* in the approaches to Halifax harbour with the loss of 44 lives. No U-Boat was sunk on the Canadian coast during the war by the RCN.

The RCN commissioned more than 350 ships and put over 100,000 volunteer men and women into uniform during the war. It escorted 180 million tons of supplies to Britain and destroyed 25 U-boats. Canada ended the war with the world's third largest navy. These were remarkable achievements for a nation of 11 million people.

One aspect of the war that has not been thoroughly explored before is Canada's campaign against the U-boats after 1943. The *U-Boat Hunters* fills the gap admirably. Milner has done an outstanding job writing a scholarly and balanced account of this offensive.

Gavin Murphy, an Ottawa lawyer, writes frequently on naval topics.

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'INTO BATTLE WE MUST GO'

By Robert Malcomson

SOLDIERS OF 1814
American Enlisted Men's Memoirs Of The Niagara Campaign

By Donald E. Graves. Old Fort Niagara Association, Inc., Youngstown, New York, 1995, 80 pp., illus. $6.50

Jarvis Hanks was feeling unsettled about the life he was leading as a 13-year old in Pawlet, Vermont during the spring of 1813, so when a sergeant from the U.S. Army passed through his town on an enlistment drive, Hanks considered a term in the service. The sergeant enticed him with a bounty of twenty dollars and a grant of 160 acres of land at the end of five years of service. Hanks won his parents' approval and signed up, unaware of the deadly path he would follow for the next 18 months, or that his account of that period would inform and entertain War of 1812 enthusiasts two centuries later.

Hanks' memoir and narratives kept by two other young Americans who marched off to fight the British are presented in this volume. The stories are edited by Donald E. Graves who has become one of the most prolific of War of 1812 specialists, publishing three major works since 1993 with at least two more titles in the works. This book gives Graves a chance to shine the spotlight on three sources who have supplied him with the foot soldier's view of the actions he has studied.

Rare, indeed, are descriptions of the battles of the 1812 War as recollected by the men who stood in the front ranks. Hanks was a drummer, Amasiah Ford and Alexander McMullen were privates and, although members of different brigades, all three participated in the summer campaign of 1814 on the Niagara Peninsula.

As obedient foot soldiers, when the order to advance was given, the men stepped forward into some of the bloodiest fighting of the war. "There was no stopping, nor escape," wrote Hanks, "into battle we must go." But the narratives also offer revelations about the everyday life of the rank and file. Ford describes losing his shoes in the mud and marching for forty-five miles across New York State with bare feet, while McMullen relates how he fell victim to a prevalent fever, but had nowhere to bed down but an open field during a downpour.

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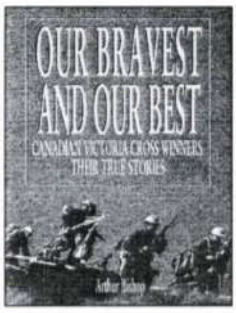

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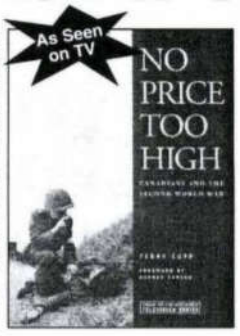

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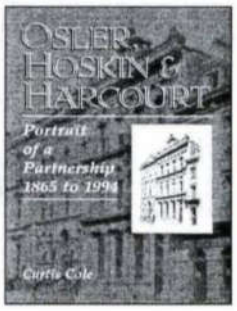

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The three memoirs are put into context by an introductory chapter in which Graves explains some of the characteristics of enlisted men and the army they joined. An important addition to each of the memoirs is the series of footnotes identifying people, places and events referred to in the text.

This attractively formatted book will be a worthy addition to the library of any student of the War of 1812, specifically, or the art of soldiering, in general. It emphasizes the voices behind the faceless men following the commanders whose reports and returns have dominated the historiography of armed conflict. From these lesser soldiers is gained an enriched understanding of the events they beheld.

Robert Malcomson lives in St. Catharines, Ontario, and is a frequent contributor to "The Beaver".

Copies of this book may be ordered from Old Fort Niagara, P.O. Box 169, Youngstown, NY 14274-0169 U.S.A. Canadian orders include $1.75 for postage and handling.

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Roaring Days: Rossland's Mines and the History of British Columbia. By Jeremy Mouat. University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1995. 237pp., illus. $39.95.

The Legend of Jack Munroe: A Portrait of a Canadian Hero. By Dorothy Farmiloe. Black Moss Press, Toronto, 1995. 250pp., illus. $18.95.

Crimes, Constables and Courts: Order and Transgression in a Canadian City, 1816-1970. By John C. Weaver. McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and Kingston, 1995. 323pp., illus. $55 hardcover; $24.95 paper.

Shipwrecks of Newfoundland and Labrador: Volume III. By Frank Galgay and Michael McCarthy. Creative Book Publishing, St. John's, 1995. 178pp., illus. $14.95.

THE PACKET

Letters, Notes and Opinion

A not-so-costly victory at Oswego

Robert Malcomson's article, "A Costly Victory at Oswego, 1814" [*The Beaver* April/May 1995], is a rare Canadian account of a battle that was one of the most important on Lake Ontario in the last year of the war. Unfortunately, like many American contemporaries, he has missed the mark in both his assessment and conclusions about this battle.

If his figures are correct, there were 69 American casualties and 89 British casualties. For an assault on a fortified position, I find these losses extremely light. No ships were lost. How then does Mr. Malcomson conclude that it was a *costly* victory? He would have us believe that the British victory was "dubious" and that it caused only a "brief" delay in Commodore Chauncey's effort to outfit his fleet.

Had the victory only resulted in the capture and or destruction of the fort, shipping and military supplies in the harbour, the success of the raid could *not* have been considered dubious by any military standard. But the attack accomplished far more than that. The "brief delay" that Mr. Malcomson would have us disregard was in fact one month. Chauncey was to co-ordinate with General Brown for the American Summer Offensive in the Niagara region at the end of June. Because of the attack on Oswego, Chauncey did not sail until the beginning of August. If Mr. Malcomson does not think this was significant, perhaps he should put himself in General Brown's shoes as he penned this message to Chauncey on 13 July, 1814 after the Battle of Chippewa Creek:

> Meet me on the lake shore at Fort George with your fleet and we will break the power of the enemy in Upper Canada. I doubt not my ability to march in any direction with your fleet carrying for me the necessary supplies. We can carry Fort George, Burlington Heights and York and proceed directly to Kingston. FOR GOD'S SAKE LET ME SEE YOU.

It was not the American fleet that responded to this plea, but the British, despite Mr. Malcomson's claim that, "Yeo's fleet retired to its naval base at the end of June and did not sail again until October". In reality, on the evening of 24 July 1814, the British brigs, HMS *Star* and HMS *Charwell* embarked General Drummond, Lt. Colonel Morrison and 400 men of the tough 89th Regiment. With a good night breeze, the ships arrived in the mouth of the Niagara River at daybreak. Augmented by troops from the local garrison at Fort George, the 89th Regiment under General Drummond's command marched up the river road to their glorious destiny at Lundy's Lane.

By repelling the American Army at Lundy's Lane, General Drummond was able to bring to a close General Brown's summer offensive in Canada. The American master plan failed because Chauncey's fleet was "briefly delayed" by the capture of Oswego and the subsequent blockade of Sackett's Harbour by the British fleet. The Battle of Lundy's Lane, a turning point in Canada's history, was won by the British because they controlled shipping and resupply on Lake Ontario.

I truly believe that Malcomson has not thought through his conclusions. Like so many historians before him, he has failed to appreciate the importance of naval control in a war zone with the impending consequences for land operations. A "Costly Victory" indeed! Considering the domino effect on subsequent events, it proved to be a bargain for Canada.

Robert J. Williamson,
Commander RCNR,
HMCS *Star* Historical Society,
Hamilton, Ontario.

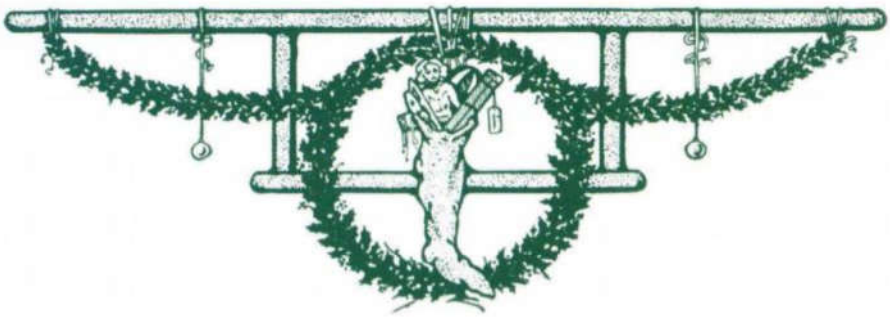
Willoughby

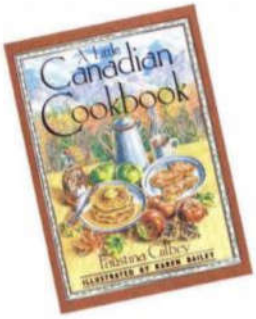
I have read with great interest the article about "Operation Canon" [*The Beaver*, April/May 1995]. Captain Ross Willoughby, the medical officer involved in the rescue attempt, was my brother.

Hugh Halliday is to be complemented on the accuracy of his research and the detail which he has been able to find is excellent. I do wish to point out one small slip of the pen. Captain Willoughby did not leave the RCAF. He left the Canadian Army! Dr. Willoughby moved to California upon leaving the Canadian Army and set up a family medical practice in Fresno. That would have been in late 1948. Ross was just winding down his medical practice when he died quite suddenly on 31 January, 1976 in Clovis. Clovis is just outside Fresno. His four sons, Hugh, Alan, Brian and John all live in California.

Doug Willoughby,
Etobicoke, Ontario.

A Christmas Selection





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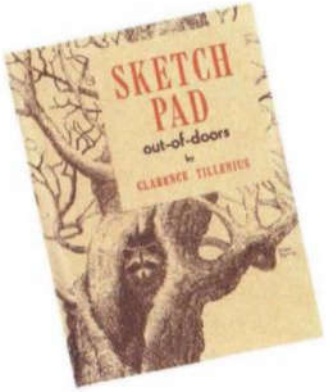

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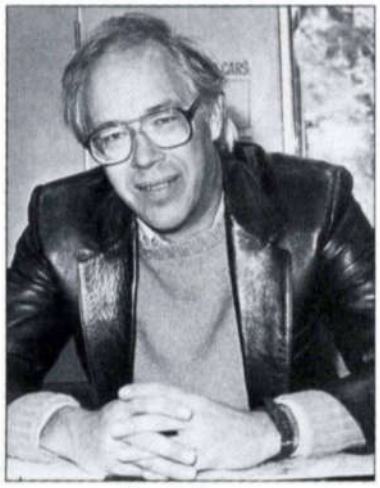
Akenson's 'Double Life'

For a decade or so Donald Harman Akenson has been a rare bird, a history professor of impeccable credentials who has nonetheless been willing to flutter the dovecotes of academe. He once diagnosed Canadian historical writing as essentially cowardly. Another time he declared, "Let's face it. Canadian history *is* boring." A historian who writes novels, he has lamented that few of his colleagues' works suggest any acquaintance with literature or the Bible. (When he finds one that does, he praises it as "lapidary" or "spiky" or "adamantine.") In the face of increasing academic conformism, he has celebrated the study of "the most politically incorrect peoples in the world." He regrets that too often historians don't seem to have much fun. And in doing so himself, he has left his colleagues suspicious that they are the ones being made fun of.

Akenson, now in his mid-fifties, has been a professor at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, since 1970, his academic specialty the history of the Irish. He's made notable contributions in that field. His book *The Irish in Ontario* puts under the microscope two rural townships adjacent to his own home. Other books follow Irish migrants to virtually every country touched by "the Irish diaspora," and he has also written on Ireland itself. The scholarly books have their icon-smashing moments. *Small Differences* argued that Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants are virtually identical peoples who insist they are totally different. *Being Had* waged wars on two Irish-American beliefs: that all Irish-Americans are Catholic and that they all settled in city slums, never on rural farms. *Islandmagee* observed that the terrible Potato Famine was preceded by massive and unrestricted population growth, and asks if it may be said that "the Irish copulated themselves to death."

Any of these would guarantee a professor a certain notoriety within his field. Still, most of Akenson's Irish work (a large, intricate, and impressive body of research and writing) fits within the conventions



Donald Akenson

of scholarship. It is the other stuff that is eye-catching. Akenson writes odd novels that combine a history lesson with a bodice-ripping romp. One of them, *At Face Value,* imagines that a nineteenth-century Canadian parliamentarian named John White was also a lesbian ex-prostitute named Eliza McCormack. Akenson has also become a publisher, not only at McGill-Queen's University Press, but also with his personal — and proudly unsubsidized Langdale Press. He's emerged as an intellectual jetsetter too, writing his books at the American art colony Yaddo, the Italian Rockefeller retreat at Bellagio, or Ireland's Tyrone Guthrie Centre.

In the last few years, Akenson has also offered some big books that move beyond the realms of Irish historical scholarship. *God's Peoples,* a bold comparison of the Israelis, the Afrikaners of South Africa, and the Ulster Protestants, was called one of the thirty best books published in the U.S. in 1992. Last year *Conor,* his lively and admiring biography of writer, diplomat, and gadfly Conor Cruise O'Brien, "the greatest living Irishman," won international attention.

In the midst of all this, Akenson also keeps sheep. Divorced, he lives alone on a stoney farm east of Kingston. When I went to meet him recently, a summer storm had brought down the big trees that anchored the windbreak in front of his farmhouse. One of those mysterious country negotiations, by which someone had reduced the trees to cordwood in exchange for some share of the product, had just been consummated. We sat outside in the heat, fuelled with doughnuts from the Gananoque Tim Horton's, to explore where all this intellectual whirlwind came from and where it is going.

It started in Minnesota, for Akenson's roots are neither Canadian nor Irish. His ancestors, he writes, were "dour and depressed Swedes run out of Sweden and settled in Minnesota" — which may be why, in jeans and teeshirt, he seems more at home in Scots and Irish eastern Ontario than any gone-rural professor has a right to. Dour or not, the Minnesota Swedes cherished education. Akenson, who grew up bright and personable, won a scholarship to Yale (and later Harvard) at the end of the 1950s. It fixed his future.

"It's important to give a sense of the early sixties," says Akenson,

meaning the early sixties for young men coming out of universities, particularly Ivy League ones. "We were just so rich. We were going to be paid for the rest of our lives to do what-ever we wanted." He recalls a friend who collected a two-year fellowship to study Norwegian, another who chose Slavic Studies as his life's work. For Akenson, the twin choices were Irish history, because of Harvard scholar John Vincent Kelleher, and Queen's, because in 1970 he did not want to live in a big American city.

"Guys in my generation have got to stop bitching," he declares. "We have had the best piece of luck of any group of academics in this century." He draws large lessons about good fortune and its obligations. "First," he says, "we might as well enjoy it. There's no sense being guilty about what we were handed. And second, we ought to take some risks."

From the first lesson seems to stem Akenson's zest for offending against scholarly pieties and national dogmas, for dashing off ingenious novels, for pursuing every travel grant and research fellowship imaginable. But it is the second lesson, the obligation to take risks, that drives his complaint about habit-bound academia.

A couple of years ago he wrote (in a scholarly journal), "At present, the writing of history in English-speaking Canada has reached an admirably high level of professional development in one mode — the German-derived doctoral thesis and its offspring the research monograph. Dismissing this tradition would be folly, but we have taken it about as far as it can go...it is a very mechanical device: when all is said and done, a sausage-machine turns out sausages."

In conversation, he takes up the theme of academic conformity among the historians. "It is not ideological — or masculine. The right is as bad as the left, and women, now they are getting established, can be as bad as the men. Partly it is how we train people to do history. We teach them to read books and to listen to historians. In effect, we train them to memorize the rabbi's text and repeat it." Partly, it is the conspiracy of any profession to exclude outsiders. "At Queen's a woman with first-class honours in English from Toronto applied to grad school in History, and we would not let her in without taking a useless qualifying year. With policies like that, we screen out all originality, all new perspectives."

Partly it is university hiring. "We are filling occupational niches instead of seeking out good minds. I compare it with the way great universities have operated in the past. They recruited original minds, no matter their formal qualifications, and let them do crazy things."

Akenson's own "crazy things" have lately become more sustained and focussed. He is close to completing the Irish diaspora studies. He thinks he may give up the novels — unless a proposed film actually gets made from *At Face Value*. He's winding up Langdale Press, judging it has fulfilled its job of creating some serious rural history in Canada. "I'm slowing down," he says, but he is also looking to the long term.

Conor, of all his non-fiction the most free from academic convention, points one direction. Inspired more by literary biography than the historical method, it was also what Akenson calls a political act, a statement of support for O'Brien's revolt against the Irish national myths that have spawned the mindless violence of the Troubles. "I love biography," says Akenson. "It's my favorite form. I had never before done a live subject. It is so much fun — and so much easier!" *Conor* won the Trillium Prize as Ontario's best book last year, against competition that included Alice Munro and Robertson Davies. Its perfect opening alone may have clinched the prize, but Akenson gives the whole book a voice that mirrors its lively, opinionated subject.

The other book may say more about what Akenson is planning as he disengages from what's merely intellectual fun and settles in for the long haul and the big risk. *God's Peoples* argued that Ulster Protestants, Afrikaners and Israelis can only be understood as chosen peoples who define themselves by the collective, permanent, and binding Old Testament convenant: "If you will be my people, I will be your God." Baldly summarized, it sounds like ethnic stereotypes and windy generalizations. Somehow it is not. The theme is ambitious, but it is not silly, and the careful scholarship and global vision of his Irish studies are reapplied to new territories. For Akenson, much of whose work had been rooted in masses of census data and socio-economic measurement, it's also an affirmation that "ideas count ... the ideas that count the most are religious."

God's Peoples may be only a prelude to Akenson's current ambition. "What I have got to do before I die," he says casually, "is the *Bible*." Paying tribute to an old Yale mentor, Judah Golding, he's starting to wrestle with the origins of *Old Testament* society, Christianity, and Judaism. He thinks he will be working on it for years. "I'm just reading the *Bible*. *Ecclesiastes* is hysterically funny. And *Proverbs:* it reads like it was writ-

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ten for an Oscar Wilde performance."

By now Akenson could probably do without the academic confines he criticizes so freely. ("In the last 30 years, we have paid no attention to the form of writing. Now we are at the point where we cannot break the cycle. I see how graduate students grade papers, forcing them to use passive voice, never to say I.") Instead, he seems more than ever committed to his role as an editor at McGill-Queen's Press — putting himself at the crank of the sausage machine, one might think.

Has he accepted the compromises implicit in that wonderful deal the universities offered his generation? Rather he seems to be driven by another moral fervour. "Everyone selects their own mission. I chose to use my influence at a place where I can make a difference, at the post-doctoral level, where the career is being made, the first book being published. I can really help to shape a monograph. I can write two pages of comments that can really make a difference. *And* I can give crucial ethical lessons. I have a standard telephone speech to young academics who have been shafted in a peer review. [I tell them] it happens, go on and don't do it to others. We need catholicity in scholarship, need better ethical behaviour. I can help make a difference."

He laughs, genuinely entertained. "I'm becoming an old Swedish pastor." Perhaps he is not exactly mellowing after all.

(In my last column, discussing the NFB film *Coppermine*, I wrote about the TB epidemic in Canada's Arctic. Soon after writing it, I discovered a valuable new book on the subject. *A Long Way From Home: The Tuberculosis Epidemic Among the Inuit* by Pat Sandiford Grygier was recently published by McGill-Queen's University Press).

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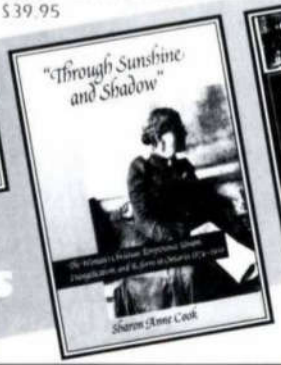

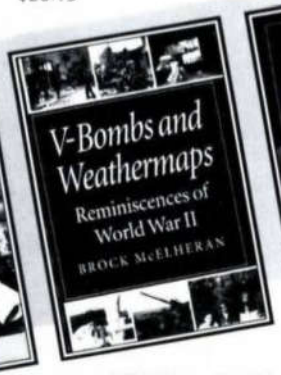

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THE SOCIETY

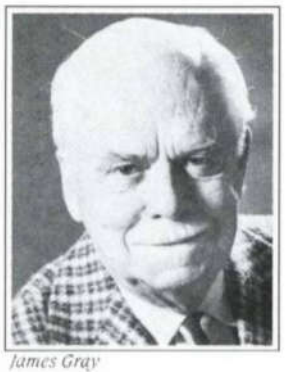
James Gray to Receive Berton Award

James Gray, one of Western Canada's leading popular historians, has been selected the recipient of the 1995 Pierre Berton Award for "distinguished achievement in popularizing Canadian history."

A former newspaperman and public relations executive, James Gray embarked on a writing career in 1966 - at age sixty - when he quit his full-time job to finish a book that he had begun earlier on his experiences during the Great Depression of the 1930s. When **The Winter Years** was published that same year, it became an instant success and the cornerstone of a prolific writing career that saw twelve books published over the following twenty-five years. **Red Lights on the Prairies** and **Booze: When Whisky Ruled the West**, two of his best-selling titles, have sold over 100,000 copies each throughout North America. They have recently been reissued, as part of the Western Canadian Classics series, published by Fifth House Publishers in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Gray's books are characterized by a focus on the everyday lives of ordinary men and women, thereby providing an intimate and authentic view of the early years in Canada's prairie towns and cities. He writes about little-known aspects of Canadian social history, a territory often ignored by other writers or historians. He has been much-honoured for his work. Included among the several awards he has received are honorary degrees and the Order of Canada. Mr. Gray resides in Calgary.

The Society established the Pierre Berton Award in 1994 to recognize an individual or institution for distinguished achievement in popularizing Canadian history on a national basis. Canadian writer and popular author, Pierre Berton,



James Gray

was the first recipient of the award and agreed to having his name associated with the award in subsequent years. The award consists of an engraved medal, a life membership in the Society and a cash payment of $5000 " to be used for a history project or organization in which the recipient may or may not be directly involved."

The Pierre Berton Award will be presented to Mr Gray in Calgary on October 5. The Right Honourable Joe Clark, a member of the Society's board of directors, will make the presentation.

Voluntary Life Insurance

The Society has made arrangements with the Seaboard Life Insurance Company for a life insurance program available exclusively to Society members and spouses resident in Canada. It will be offered strictly on a voluntary basis.

This is a permanent life insurance program that will be available to all Society members between the ages of 50 and 84. All members who apply, regardless of the state of their health, will be accepted under this program. Medical examinations will not be required. Coverage from $5,000 to $20,000 will be offered.

The majority of Society members are over 45 years of age; the median member age is 65. This program will be of interest to members who have retired and who no longer have group insurance benefits or those who, for health reasons or age, have been denied insurance or have found the premiums to be prohibitively expensive. This program will meet such special needs.

The program will be conducted on a direct-mail basis only. No salesperson will call and there will be no solicitation by telephone.

A "test" mailing to some 5,000 members will be conducted in January 1996. Assuming positive results, the program will be fully introduced later that year.

Internet Worth

The International Computer Network (Internet) may be trendy but it is not a passing fad; it represents the future of communication.

Over three million Canadians are using the Internet. The global audience is staggering. The Society is now available to all of them, at the click of a mouse.

The Society's home page on the World Wide Web is located at **http://www.cyberspc.mb.ca/~otmw/cnhs/cnhs.html**. Our e-mail address is **beaver@cyberspc.mb.ca**. If you visit our home page, it will tell you more about the Society - what it is ; what it does; what it costs to join. You will be directed to our membership page that will tell you how to join. You will also be directed to **The Beaver** where you will get a taste of the magazine - the contents page and a sample article from the August/September issue. This page will be changed periodically to reflect the content of new issues.

Early indications are that the modest investment required to get the Society on the Internet has been worthwhile. In its first three weeks on the system, the Society had over 100 visitors to its home page.

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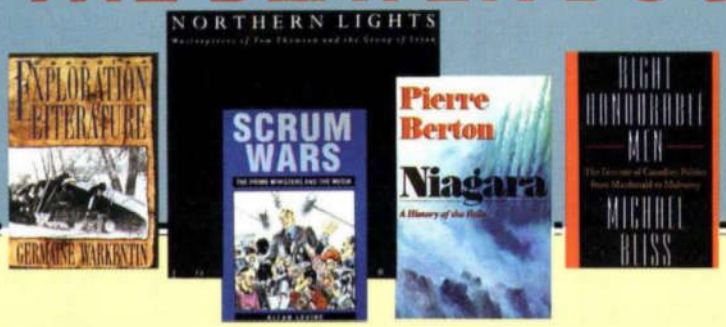

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